











**SOCIAL AND RURAL ECONOMY  
OF  
NORTHERN INDIA**

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## ABBREVIATIONS

An.	Anguttaranikāya	Peri.	Periplus of the
Āpast	Āpastamba		Erythrean Sea
Arr.	Arrian's Indica	Ptol.	Ptolemy's
Arr. Anab.	Arrian's Anabasis		Geography
Arth.	Arthaśāstra of	Pug.	Puggalapannatti
	Kauṭilya	Pv.	Petavatthu
Av.	Atharvaveda	PvA.	Petavatthu
Baudh.	Baudhāyana		Atthakathā
Ch. Dhp.	Chinese Dhamma-	Rām.	Rāmāyaṇa
	pada (Beal)	Ṛv.	Ṛgveda
Cp.	Cariyapitaka	Sn.	Samyuttanikāya
Cv.	Cullavagga	Śp.	Śāntiparva
Dhp.	Dhammapada		Mahābhārata
DhpA.	Dhammapada	Str.	Strabo's
	Atthakathā		Geography
Diod.	Diodorus	Śuk.	Śukranīti
Dn.	Dīghanikāya	Sut.	Suttanipāta
E. I.	Epigraphia Indica	Therag.	Theragāthā
Gaut.	Gautama	Therig.	Therīgāthā
Jāt.	Jātaka	Ud.	Udāna
J. S.	Jaina Sutras	Vās.	Vāśiṣṭha
	(Jacobi)	Vbh.	Vibhanga
Kāt.	Kātyāyana	VbhA.	Vibhanga
			Atthakathā
Mah.	Mahavāstu	Vin.	Vinaya
Mbh.	Mahābhārata	Viṣ.	Viṣṇu
Mil.	Milindapañho	Vṛ.	Vṛhaspati
Mn.	Majjhimanikāya	Vv.	Vimānavatthu
Mv.	Mahāvagga	VvA.	Vimānavatthu
Nār.	Nārada		Atthakathā
		Yāj.	Yājñavalkya

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" " VII, " Viṣṇu.

" " XIV, ii, " Vāśiṣṭha & Baudhāyana.

" " XXV, " Manu

" " XXXIII, " Nārada & Vṛhaspati.

" " XXII, XLV, *Jaina Sutras.*

" " XIII, XVII, XX. *Vinaya Texts.*

" " X, the *Dhammapada* & the *Suttanipāta*.

" " XXXV, XXXVI. *Questions of Milinda.*

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" *Chariyapiṭaka.*

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" (trans. of *Therīgāthā*).

**Fausbøll :** *The Jātakas* (text).

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## CHAPTER I

### DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANISATION OF TRADE

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#### *Trade follows industry*

Trade is a natural sequel to industry. In the wake of a *sippa* must follow *vohāra*. For an industrial product must, as a matter of course, look for a market for its disposal. Such markets and such transactions are necessary concomitants of any industrial effort and occur in the earliest stages of economic life. With the specialisation of industries and their localisation in particular places, whether in a whole country or in a village or in a small street of a town, this commercial intercourse multiplies in proportion. The horse-producing Sindhu and the cloth-manufacturing Kāśī are brought into the same intimate economic relationship as were formerly the animal-breeder and weaver plying their trade side by side in the same village. Exchange of goods bound down the whole land of India, particularly the north, in a close economic unity to which even Rome,

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Egypt, Arabia, Persia, China, Indonesia and farther East were brought into brisk commercial intercourse.

### *Stockists and shops*

Between the producer and the consumer stood the stockist and the middleman. The vendor stocked various goods from producers in his shop for sale. We know of grain merchants (*dhaññika*) who kept double-mouthed sample-bags (*ubhatimukhā mutoli*) to keep samples in of various sorts of grain (Dn. XXII. 5). Merchants traded in diverse article like fruits, herbs, sugarcane, honey, ointment, planks of wood, tooth-brush and smoking-pipe (Jāt. IV. 495). Among traders, practising in a town are dealers in cloth (*dussika*), in perfumes (*gandhika*), groceries (*paññika*), fruits (*phalika*), and roots (*mūlika*) (Mil. 331, 262). *Tulādhāra*, the trader lived by selling juices (*rasa*), scents (*gandha*), barks and timbers, herbs, fruits and roots<sup>1</sup> (Mbh. XII. 261. 2). The shops were set up in rows on the two sides of the main thoroughfares or around the market, place (*singhataṭṭa*, *gāmamajjha*, *bhaṇḍa-bhajanīyaṃ ṭhānaṃ*) with a tendency for shops of the same wares to group together forming a special bazar of their own.

### *The hawker*

Shops were not always stationary. They might be moving. In the Jātakas the hawker is a common sight. A merchant goes about from village to village hawking goods

1 The producer and the dealer are not always clearly distinguished, e.g., the *gandhika* may mean one who prepares scents as well as one who stocks and sells them. So an *odonika* is both a caterer and a distributor of foodstuffs.

on a donkey's back (vāṇijo gadrabhabhārakena vohāraṃ karonto vicarati, II. 109 ff.). A petty hawker shouts with his wagon in the middle of the village (gāmamajjhe) with "buy my cucumber, buy my cucumber" (I. 205). A grocer's daughter (paṇṇikadhītā) hawks jujubes in a basket "buy my jujubes, buy my jujubes" (badarāṇi gaṇhatha badarāṇi gaṇhathā'ti, III. 21). Sometimes these people evince a higher sort of business intelligence. Two potters apportion two streets in the same town between themselves to eliminate competition and peddle their pots from door to door (I. 111).

### *Big trader : caravans*

Besides these small traders there were big merchants who collected huge cart-loads of wares from their centres of production and sent them to distant countries where they might be sold at a higher price. The Jātakas are full of references to caravans or long lines of two-wheeled bullock carts such as is represented at Bharhut in the scene of the purchase and gift of the Jetavana. Their strength is given at the conventional figure of 500 wagons under a leader (satthavāha, I. 98, 368, 377, 404; III. 200, 403; V. 164, 471). "The carts struggled along slowly, through the forests, along the tracts from village to village kept open by the peasants. The pace never exceeded two miles an hour. Smaller streams were crossed by gullies leading down to fords, the longer ones by cart ferries."<sup>1</sup> Regarding one of these an interesting piece of information is given. A great caravan of one thousand carts (mahāsakaṭṭasattho sakaṭasahaṣṣaṃ) was going from the East country to the West country. Where-

<sup>1</sup> Rhys Davids : *Buddhist India*, p. 98.

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ever it went it consumed swiftly straw, wood, water and verdure (tiṇokaṭṭhodakaṃ haritakavaṇṇaṃ). Now in that caravan were two caravan-leaders, each commanding one-half of the carts.<sup>2</sup> Thinking that 'wherever we go we consume everything'—they divided the caravan into two equal portions and equipped with food and provender started separately (Dn XIII. 23 ; cf. Jāt I. 98).

##### *Correspondents*

The trade magnates had "correspondents" in big and opulent cities with whom they disposed of their goods wholesale. A correspondent and friend of Anāthapiṇḍika at the border sent 500 cart-loads of local wares to barter in the shop of the Sāvatti merchant. The people were hospitably received, lodged and provided with money for their needs,—and given goods in exchange. A return despatch from Anāthapiṇḍika was summarily refused with insults by the border correspondent, for which however he was paid back in his own coin during the next offer from him (Jāt I 377).

##### *Wholesale and retail trade*

The wholesale dealers distributed the wares to retail dealers on a commission or share of the profit basis. The rules of the Arthaśāstra on retail sale seem to be based on the assumption that the latter did not purchase the goods and sell them in better terms to derive a middleman's profit. They were rather agents or salesmen of wholesale dealers, possibly representing several at a time. The Arthaśāstra lays down: "Retail dealers selling the merchandise of others at

2 So the unit of 500 under the charge of one *satthavāha* remains in tact.

prices prevailing at particular localities and times shall hand over to the wholesale dealers as much of the sale proceeds and profit as is realised by them. Rules of sealed deposit shall apply here. If owing to distance in time or place there occurs any fall in the value of the merchandise, the retail dealers shall pay the value and profit at that rate which obtained when they received the merchandise."

Vaiyyāvṛtyakarā yathādeśakālaṃ vikrīṇānāṃ paṇyaṃ yathājātamūlyamudayaṃ ca dadyuḥ. Śeṣamupanidhinaṃ vyākhyātam. Deśakālātīpātane vā parihīnaṃ sampradānakālikena arghena maulyam-udayaṃ ca dadyuḥ.

"This rule does not hold good for servants selling their masters' wares. Such merchants as belong to trade guilds or are trustworthy and are not condemned by the king need not restore even the value of that merchandise which is lost or destroyed owing to its inherent defects or to some unforeseen accidents. But of such merchandise as is distanced by time or place, they shall restore as much value and profit as remains after making allowance for wear and tear of the merchandise."

Sāṃvyavahārikeṣu vā prātyayikeṣvarājāvācyeṣu bhreṣo-panipātābhyāṃ naṣṭaṃ vinaṣṭaṃ vā mūlyamapi na dadyuḥ. Deśakālāntarītānāṃ tu paṇyānāṃ kṣayavyayaśuddhamūlyamu-dayam ca dadyuḥ. Paṇyasamavāyānaṃ ca pratyamśam. III. 12.

Elsewhere it is given that the trader should calculate the daily earnings of middlemen and fix that amount on which they are authorised to live ; for whatever income falls between sellers and purchasers ( i. e., brokerage ) is different from profit.

Yannisṛṣṭam upajīveyuḥ tadeśāṃ divsasañjātaṃ saṃkhyāya vaṇik sthāpayet. Kretṛ-vikretro-rantarapatitam ādāy-ādanyam bhavati. IV. 2.

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This is obviously the agent's commission which is to be fixed by the trader to a rate likely to give an enterprising middleman quite a decent income.

### *Corporate organisation : partnership*

Corporate organisation as developed in industries did not progress as far in commerce. With regard to industries guild organisation was the order of the day, with commerce it was an exception, it being generally pursued individually and independently. Partnership was of course not uncommon. Vidura quotes an adage to king Dhṛtarāṣṭra that concerns of wealth should not be pursued alone (Mbh. V. 33. 50). Two merchants from Sāvatti trade with their wares in 500 cart-loads from the East country to the West country and come back to Sāvatti with a lucrative profit.

Sāvattivāsino hi kuṭavāṇijo ca paṇḍitavāṇijo ca dve janā pattikā hutvā pañcasakaṭasatāni bhaṇḍassa pūretvā pubbantato aparantam vicaramānā vohāraṃ katvā bahu-lābham labhitvā Sāvattim paccāgaṃimsu.

They then set down to divide the returns (Jāt. II 167). Similarly, two merchants from Benares dispose their wares in the country districts in partnership (dve janā ekato vaṇijjaṃ karontā laddhalābbā). They fall to quarrel over the share of the proceeds, one claiming share of a half on the strength of equal investment in stock-in-trade, another two-third on the score of superior acumen. The former wins (I. 404).

### *Guilds*

But of the *seni*, *gāma* and *pūga* there is hardly any reference. In the Karle Cave is recorded a gift by the *gāma*

of traders...(*vaniya-gāmasa*) from *Dhenukākāṭṭa*, but nothing is known about its nature or constitution. Trade guilds seem to be conceived in the rules of Gautama (XI. 20 f.) and in the prognosis of the *Arthaśāstra* that traders unite to raise prices like modern corners and make a profit of cent per cent (VIII. 4). But, as has been already seen, individual tradesmen entered into similar compacts for mutual interest from their inherent business instinct, and these show at best an appreciation of the community of commercial interests. Instances of co-operation are not rare. Parties of mariners voyaging by the same vessel under a *jetthaka* may have chartered it in concert (Jāt. II. 128 ; IV. 138 ff ; V. 75 ; VI. 34). Parties in a caravan were brought together for purposes of safety through long forest journeys and accepted the leadership of the *satthavāha* for guidance as to halts, watering, precautions against brigands and beasts, routes, fording, etc.<sup>1</sup> "Subordination was not however always ensured (Jāt. I. 108, 368 ; II. 295 ; III. 200), and the institution does not warrant the inference of any further syndicalism among traders." As regards commercial organisation, Mrs. Rhys Davids' statement stands substantially correct : that there is "no instance as yet produced from early Buddhist documents pointing to any corporate organisation of the nature of a guild or Hansa League."<sup>2</sup> Later literature gives undisputed evidences of such leagues. For example, in the *Śukranīti* "a *sāmayikapatra* or business deed is one which individuals frame after combining their shares of capital (*svadhanāṃśa*) for some business concern

1 For example, the merchants in a party of 1,000 under the two leaders in Dn. XXIII. 23. See *supra*, p. 4.

2 Cambridge History, p. 211.

shares of capital (svadhanāṃśa) for some business concern (vyavahāra) (II. II. 627 f.). The reason for the somewhat later development of commercial combines was probably that trade was still a wandering profession while industrial organisations depended largely upon settled relations and ties of neighbourhood.

### *Speculation*

Trade in the Jātakas is very often speculative. A young man picks up and sells a dead mouse and by successful dealings works up the capital to become rich. The last transaction is in a ship's cargo which he holds and disposes at 200,000 pieces (I. 120-122). The outlay being 1,000 the profit is 20,000 p.c. 100, 200 and 400 p.c. are the profits at which caravan masters barter their wares (I. 98 ff., 109; IV. 2). A boy begins with a humble stock-in-trade, voyages to Suvannabhūmi with some other merchants in a ship and makes enough money to recover his paternal kingdom (VI. 34).

### *Trade methods*

Indications of the development of commerce may be had from the prevalence of several trade practices. Business deeds or documents recording a description of the property purchased and the price paid for it were known among merchants (Br. VIII. 7; cf. Śuk. III. 378 f.). Big deals were made on credit. The speculating young man bought the cargo of a ship on credit giving his signet ring as security. Sale by public auction after notification is witnessed by Strabo (XV. i. 50-52)<sup>1</sup> and in the Arthaśāstra (II. 21).

<sup>1</sup> Vincent Smith has corrected the reading to sale after having the royal seal (Asoka).

Merchants advertised their goods by singing their praise themselves (vāṇijā viya vācasanthutiya. Com : yathā vāṇijo attano bhaṇḍassa vaṇṇaṃ eva bhanati, V. 425) or through an agent, e.g., the hostess of a travelling tailor (tunnavāya) who on his behalf gives publicity to his profession in the village (amma vīṭhisabhāgaṇaṃ ārocehi'ti, sā sakalagāme ārocesi) so that in one day 1,000 pieces were earned (VI. 366). Political crises had their repercussions on business transactions. After Rama's exile the business of Ayodhyā suffered under general depression and shops remained closed for several days (Rām. II. 48. 35, 37 ; 71. 41).

### *The successful shopkeeper*

The application, judgment, cleverness and 'connexion' of the successful shopkeeper (pāpaṇika) are interestingly discussed (An. I. 116 f. ; cf. Mn II. 7 ; Vin I. 255). He is shrewd (cakkhumā), knowing his goods (paṇiyaṃ jānāti) : this article 'bought for so much and sold for so much, will bring in so much money, such and such profit (idaṃ paṇiyaṃ evaṃ kītaṃ evaṃ vikkayamānaṃ ettakaṃ mūlaṃ bhavissati ettako udayo ti). He is clever (vidhūro), skilful in buying and selling goods (kusalo hoti paṇiyaṃ ketuñ ca vikketuñ ca). He inspires confidence (nissayasampanno), inasmuch as wealthy people seeing his stability give him credit. Possessed of these three characteristics, a shopkeeper in no time attains greatness and increase of wealth (tīhi angehi samannāgato pāpaṇiko na cirass' eva mahantattaṃ vā vepullattaṃ vā pāpuṇāti bhogasu).

### *The setṭhi : his wealth*

Despite the absence of the guild system, that there was a certain organisation in urban business is apparent

from the role of the *setthi*. The words *śreṣṭhin* and *śreṣṭhya*, used in the Vedic literature, would appear from their contents, to mean 'headman' and 'his position of primacy'.<sup>1</sup> Later, in Pali literature the *setthi* conveys the idea of one of the upper bourgeoisie, a great merchant or commercial magnate who sends his caravan from *pubbanta* to *aparanta* or ships his cargo across the high seas. In a more technical sense the *setthi* was the head of this trading class, a wealthy and popular magnate who, like the rural *bhojaka* and the industrial *jetthaka*, stood in close relation to the king. His wealth is computed at the conventional figure of 80 crores (Jāt. I. 345, 444, 466 ; II. 331 ; III. 56, 129, 300 ; IV. 1, 255 ; V. 382). He stocked huge quantities of grain in his granaries (I. 467) obviously to dispose in scarcity on advantageous terms. With his big capital he employed small craftsmen and benefited by their labour (*setṭhim nissāya vasantassa tunnakārassa tunnakammena jīvissāma*, IV. 38). The *setthi* of Rājagaha is competent to pay 200,000 *kahāpaṇas* as medical fee (Mv. VIII. 16).

### *Leader of merchants*

The compound Rājagahasetṭhi is a pointer to the fact that the richest merchant of a town or village, the *setthi par excellence*, discharged certain specific functions and had a unique position with respect to others. In the inscriptions of the Sanchi tope the *setthi* of a village is in several instances mentioned without his proper name, while the *gahapati* appears with his name and sometimes

<sup>1</sup> Macdonell and Keith : *Vedic Index*.

village as well.<sup>1</sup> His was a position of authority over the fellow traders. During his dedication of the Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍika, the chief *seṭṭhi* of Sāvattthi was attended by 500 *seṭṭhis*.

### *Between king and merchants*

Through this leader the king maintained his contact with the mercantile community. In this capacity of a go-between the *seṭṭhi* filled one of the highest offices of state (*seṭṭhitṭhāna*. Jāt. I. 120 ff. ; III. 448; V. 382 ; *seṭṭhita*, Mahāvamsa, p. 69). The *gahapati*, one of the seven jewels (*ratanam*) of a king is explained by Buddhaghosa as *seṭṭhi-gahapati*. This official is often seen waiting upon the king (*rājupaṭṭhānaṃ gato*, III. 19 ; *rājupaṭṭhānaṃ katvā*, IV. 63). His relation is sometimes informal and personal. A king desirous of renouncing the world is supplicated by his parents, wife, children, the commander-in-chief, the *seṭṭhi*, and the people. The *seṭṭhi* offers him his accumulated fortune and requests him to stay (V. 185).

### *Position with citizens*

The rich business lord probably led the co-operative efforts of merchants in his town and was very popular with his community. Presumably this popularity and influence with his community and with the people at large was the reason for his selection into king's service. The *seṭṭhi* of Rājagaha does good service both to the king and to the merchants' community (*ayaṃ kho seṭṭhi-gahapati bahūpakāro rañño c'eva negamassa ca*, Mv. VIII.

1 The *seṭṭhi*, who appears with his name and place in the Karle Cave In., is an ordinary merchant, not the chief *seṭṭhi*.

16). A *setthi* in office is honoured both by the king and by citizens and countryfolk alike (*rājapūjito nagarajanapadapūjito*, V. 382). When the princes and queens fell victim to a king's furore the citizens uttered not a word; but when the *setthis* were seized for execution, the whole city was troubled and the people went with their relatives and begged for mercy (VI. 135).

### *Hereditary office? Social rank*

The *setthi* therefore was not a civil official in the sense the *senāpati* or the *amātya* was. As an intermediary, he was half an official and half a popular figure. As an official he was selected by the king on the basis of his wealth and influence (Jāt. I. 120-22). But as the son generally succeeded to his father's trade (II. 64, 236; *setthānu-setthīnaṃ kulānaṃ puttā*, Mv. I. 9. 1.) and inherited his wealth and influence, the office of the *setthi* nominally selective, tended to be hereditary. The sixth descendant of a *setthi* is found continuing in the post of his forefathers (Jāt. V. 384). There is little to distinguish between social rank and civil office in this respect.<sup>1</sup> The two were co-existent and a *setthi* fallen in social position was little likely to continue in the king's grace; nor would the king make an alternative selection when the son of the retired official was fit to take the mantle.

### *Administrative functions*

The specific functions of the *setthi* as a civil official is nowhere clearly defined. A king by his decree makes a

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ".....it would seem that the rank of *setthi* was hereditary, and this is confirmed by the later literature: but this applies to the social rank only, and not to the office." Rhys Davids: *Vinaya Texts*, I, p. 102.

gift of the East market town to a merchant (pācinaya-vamajjhaka gāmaṃ rājabhogena bhuñjā'ti) and makes the other thousand merchants his subordinate (sesaseṭṭhino etass'-eva upaṭṭhākā hontu, VI. 344). There is hardly any authority to render *seṭṭhi* as 'treasurer'<sup>1</sup> for which the Pali word is *bhaṇḍāgārika*. He may have assisted the king in framing his financial policy and advised him on the methods and rates of assessment on big business. He carried the king's orders to his fellow merchants and presumably was responsible for their execution. As emoluments for his services, the tolls, taxes and customs dues of a particular business area might be assigned to him. Sometimes he was assisted by a second (anuseṭṭhi, Jāt. V. 384 ; Mv. I. 9. 1) from his own class. He had little to do with the king's treasury.

### *Municipal power*

With the growing industrial and commercial life of the town, the *seṭṭhi* rose into power and prominence and came to play a new role. As leader of the most important urban class and as a civil official of the highest rank he was the hot favourite to be entrusted with municipal administration,—to be promoted to the *viṣaya*-council or even to the position of Lord Mayor. The Basarh seals and the Damodarpur and Paharhpur inscriptions throw sidelights on the civil functions of the *seṭṭhi*. This is nothing strange for the head of a class who, like the upper bourgeoisie of the national-democratic age in Europe, was at the forefront of every liberal movement and set the example of unstinted charity. The hoarded crores of

1 . In the translation of the Jātakas under Cowell's editorship.

Anāthapiṇḍika, emptied for the alleviation of the miseries of the poor and for the propitiation of the Saṃgha, the great *caitya* cave at Karle and similar costly gifts at Kanheri, Mathura and Sanchi give a glimpse into the means and ways by which they attained to their phenomenal power and popularity.

## CHAPTER II

### PRICE AND MARKET

Free bargain : haggling. Price quotations. Customary rates and indeterminate price. Price-fixing. The court-valuer. Price regulation. Statute-fixed prices. Cornering and inflation of price. Proportion between big and small trade.

Standard of living.

“And because they first bargain and afterwards come to terms (the priest and the king over the *soma* juice in terms of cow-payment) therefore, about any and everything that is for sale here, people first bargain and afterwards come to terms.” (Sat. Br. III. iii. 3. 1-4.)

*Free bargain : haggling*

This practice of a “free bargain” unregulated by law and custom was widely prevalent up to the beginning of the 6th century B.C. Prices were determined mostly by haggling, sometimes climbing up from a single *kahāpaṇa* to 100 or 1,000 (Jāt. III. 126 f.). “The act of exchange between producer or dealer, and consumer was, both before and during the Jātaka age, a ‘free’ bargain, a transaction unregulated by any system of statute-fixed prices. Supply, limited by slow transport and individualistic production, but left free and stimulated, under the latter system, to efforts after excellence on the one hand and to tricks of adulteration on the other,.....sought to equate with a demand which was no doubt largely compact of customary usage

and relatively unaffected by the swifter fluctuations termed fashion."<sup>1</sup>

### *Price quotations*

The statement may be best examined in the light of some available price quotations which may be arranged into the following schedule :

COMMODITY	PLACE	PRICE	REFERENCE
<b>ANIMALS</b>			
Slave—male or female	...	100 <i>kahāpaṇa</i>	Satena kītadāsa, Jāt. I. 224 ; satakītadāsī, III. 343.
Slave—king's son	...	1,000 gold <i>nikkha</i>	VI. 547.
A serviceable ass	Mithilā	8 <i>kahāpaṇa</i>	VI. 343.
Oxen—I pair	Benares	24    „	II. 305.
An average horse	„	1,000    „	II. 306.
A thoroughbred foal	„	6,000    „	II. 289.
A team of chariot horses	Mithilā	90,000    „	VI. 404.
A nice plump dog	...	1    „ + a cloak	II. 247.
A dead mouse	...	1 <i>kākaṇi</i>	I. 120.
<b>EATABLES</b>			
Meat for a chameleon	Mithilā	1 <i>kākaṇi</i> — $\frac{1}{2}$ <i>māsaka</i>	VI. 346.
A fish		7 <i>māsaka</i>	II. 424.
A jar of spirits	Benares	1 <i>kahāpaṇa</i>	I. 350.

1 Mrs. Rhys Davids : J.R.A.S., 1901, p. 875.

COMMODITY	PLACE	PRICE	REFERENCE
Ghee or oil—a small modicum	Sāvatti	1 „	Vin. IV. 248 f.
Dinner dish for royal horse	Banaras	100,000 „	I. 178.
Royal dinner dish	„	100,000 „	II. 319.

## CLOTHING

Nun's cloak—1	Sāvatti	16 <i>kahāpaṇa</i>	Vin. IV. 266.
A robe for a court lady	„	1,000 „	II. 24.
A Sivi robe	„	1,000 „	IV. 401.
A robe of Kāsi muslin	Vedeha	100,000 „	Satasahasagghanikaṃ kāśikavattamaṃ, III 11 ; VI. 403, 450,
Shoes or sandals—each pair according to quality	Sāvatti	100-1,000 „	IV. 15.
Jewelled housings of a royal elephant	...	2,000,000 „	VI. 488.
Tailoring repairs : a day's earnings in a village	Banaras	1,000 „	VI. 366.

## ORNAMENTS

An ornament of a <i>seṭṭhi's</i> wife	Sāvatti	100,000 <i>kahāpaṇa</i>	III. 435.
Gold necklace fitted with sandalwood	Sivi	100,000 „	VI. 480 ; 1. 340.
Gold wreath of a <i>seṭṭhi's</i> wife	...	1,000 „	Sahasagghanikaṃ kāñcanamālam, II. 373

## MISCELLANEOUS

Sandal perfume (quantity ?)	...	100,000 <i>kahāpaṇa</i>	Satasahasagghanikaṃ candanasāraṃ, II. 373.
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## COMMODITY PLACE PRICE REFERENCE

Garland, perfume and spirits : for day-labourers	Banaras	$\frac{1}{2}$ <i>māsaka</i> + $\frac{1}{2}$ <i>māsaka</i>	III. 446.
A bundle of grass	Banaras	1 <i>māsaka</i>	III. 130.
Merit of a pious act	Sāvatti	200-500 <i>kahāpaṇa</i>	I. 422.

## HOUSE AND FIELD

A play-half for 1,000 boys worked by voluntary labour	Mithilā	1,000 <i>kahāpaṇa</i>	VI. 332.
A monastic cell		500 „	pañcasatam vihāram Mn. 52.
A field (measurement ?) Nasik		4,000 „	Nasik Cave In.

## JOURNEY AND TRANSIT

Hire of carriage per hour	Banaras	8 „	I. 151.
Fording of 500 carts hiring a bull	Banaras	1,000 „	I. 195:
Fee for a forest convey	„	1,000 „	II. 335 ; V. 22, 471.

### Ferry toll for

1 empty cart	Brahmarai	1 „	Manu, VIII. 404
1 man's load	(Kuru,	$\frac{1}{2}$ „	
1 animal	and Pañcāla,		
1 woman	Matsya,	$\frac{1}{2}$ „	
1 man without load	Sūrasena)	$\frac{1}{2}$ „	

## FEES, PENSIONS AND SALARIES

Teacher's honorarium (for a whole course)	Taxila	1,000 <i>kahāpaṇa</i>	I. 205 ; II. 47, 278 ; IV. 38 ; V. 128.
		7 <i>nikkha</i> (insufficient)	IV. 224.

COMMODITY	PLACE	PRICE	REFERENCE
Actors'—to tour a whole country	Banaras	1,000 <i>kahāpaṇa</i>	III. 61.
Doctor's—for curing <i>seṭṭhi</i> 's wife	Sāketa	16,000 „ + 2 slaves, a carriage and horses	Vin. I. 272
Doctor's—for curing a <i>seṭṭhi</i>	Rājagaha	20,000 <i>kahāpaṇa</i>	Mv. -
Court-valuer's for each testing	Bhāru-kaccha	8 „ (insufficient)	IV. 138.
Chief Courtesan's—1 night	Banaras	1,000 <i>kahāpaṇa</i>	III. 435, 59 f, 475 IV. 248 f.
„ „	Vesāli	50 „	Mv VIII. 1.
„ „	Rājagaha	100 „	Mv. VIII. 3.
Chief Courtesan's salary	...	1,000 „	Arth.II. 27.
Snake-charmer's wind-fall—1 day	...	1,000 „	IV. 466.
Hire of an assassin	...	1,000 „	V. 126.
Archer—capable of exhibition shooting—1 year	Banaras	100,000 „ (274 <i>kahāpaṇa</i> daily, too high)	II. 87.
„ „ 1 fortnight	„	1,000 <i>kahāpaṇa</i> (67 Ks. daily, normal)	I 357.
„ „ 1 day	„	1,000 <i>kahāpaṇa</i> (too high)	V. 128.
Tracker of footsteps	Banaras	1,000 <i>kahāpaṇa</i>	III. 505.
A coolie—1 day		1— $\frac{1}{2}$ <i>māsaka</i>	III. 326.
Pension for courtiers and Brāhmanas—1 day	Aṅga	100 <i>kahāpaṇa</i> 500 1,000	Mn. 94.

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COMMODITY	PLACE	PRICE	REFERENCE
Sala ry of royal Offi- cers : Grades—	...	48,000	Kahāpaṇa Arth. V. 3
1 year or month		24,000 „	
		12,000 „	
		8,000 „	
		4,000 „	
		2,000 „	
		1,000 „	
		500-60 „	
Spies : grades—	...	1,000-250	
Messenger—for 1 <i>yo-</i> <i>jana</i>	...	10 „	
Messenger for 1 <i>yoj.</i> above 10 up to 100		20 „	
Superintendent of stables	...	10,000 „	Mbh. III

### *Customary rates and indeterminate price*

A few customary rates are quite apparent, e.g., 100 *kahāpaṇas* for a slave, 100,000 for a gold necklace or costly jewellery, 1,000 for a hall, for a course of learning or for a visit to the chief courtesan, 67 coppers a day for a skilful archer is quite fair but the figures of 274 or 1,000 are pretty high to excite the jealousy of other officers. Similarly, 8 coppers for each valuation is contemptuously refused as a 'barber's gift' by a price expert. But except for a few items like these it is hazardous to theorise on the basis of the Pali canonical data. Figures are often hyperbolic and wrecklessly exaggerated. Fancy prices are quoted for articles of royal consumption irrespective of their real valuation. The

price for a horse or mare may range from 1 *kahāpaṇa* to 100,000. A pair of shoes presented to Buddha may worth double the cost of building a *vihāra* and while sandal-perfume may sell at the rate of 100,000, a pair of water-carriers may plan their merry-making with garland, perfume and spirits with a purse of 1/16 of a *kahāpaṇa*. Prices varied not only in localities and with the ingress and egress of the commodity. It depended to a great extent on the fancy of the customer and on the need and bargaining capacity of the parties.

### *Fixed price*

But better business principles than unrestricted bargaining were just beginning to dawn. For certain commodities and in certain quarters the advantages of a fixed price were growingly realised. When two merchants were bound for the same destination with their caravan, it was for the foolish merchant to gloat over 'fixing his own price' and anticipate his competitor. The wise Bodhisatta chose to go after him thinking "haggling over prices is killing work; whereas I following later shall sell my wares at the price already fixed" (*agghaṭṭhapanam nāma manussānam jīvita voropanasadisam, aham pacchato gantvā etehi ṭhapitaḥḥen'eva bhaṇḍam vikkīṇissāmi, Jāt. I. 98*).

### *The court-valuer*

The beginning of price fixation is in the institution of the court-valuer (*agghakāraka, agghāpanika, Com. Therag. 20, 393 ff. ; Jāt. I. 124*). He settled the price of goods ordered for the palace. He stood between the dilemma of offending the king with too high a rate and of driving away the tenders by excessive cheapening. In making an

estimate he had to consider the fancy and liberality of his master. His decision was liable to revision by the king (II. 31) and he himself was not immune from bribes and baits (I. 124-126). In spite of these drawbacks the system conduced to set up certain standard rates. The office of the court-valuer was also gradually transformed into that of a price-expert or into a ministry or board of price control for the whole market. The municipal bodies of the Mauryas regulated prices (Str. XV. i. 50). In the Arthaśāstra it is ordained that the price-expert shall, on consideration of outlay, quantity manufactured, amount of toll, interest on outlay, hire and other expenses, fix the price of merchandise with due regard to its having been manufactured long ago or imported from a distant country.

Deśakālāntaritānām tu paṇyānām prakṣepaṃ paṇyanis-pattim śulkaṃ vṛddhimavakrayaṃ vyayānanyāṃśca saṃ-khyāya sthāpayet argham arghavit, IV. 2.

### *Statutory price and price control*

Statute-fixed prices appear first in Manu and in the Arthaśāstra. According to the Arthaśāstra a profit of 5 per cent over and above the fixed price of local commodities and of 10 per cent on foreign produce will be fixed. Merchants who raise the price or realise profit even to the extent of  $\frac{1}{2}$  paṇa more than the above in the sale or purchase of commodities shall be fined 5 paṇas in case of realising 100 to 200 paṇas (tataḥ paramarghaṃ vardhayatām kraye vikraye vā bhāvayatām paṇāśate pañcapanādisato daṇḍaḥ, IV. 2). In Manu, the king is to settle prices publicly with the merchants every fifth or fourteenth day, fixing "the rates for the purchase and sale of all

marketable goods" after consideration of their expenses of production (VIII. 401 f.).

### *Cornering and inflation*

With growing commercialisation new economic factors arose to set the legal price at naught. Against the big business and monopoly concerns the royal statute was of little avail. It is confessed in the *Arthaśāstra* that "traders unite in causing rise and fall in the value of articles, and live by making profits cent per cent in *paṇas* or *kumbhas*" (*vaidehakāstu sambhūya paṇyānām utkarṣopakaṛṣaṃ kurvānāḥ paṇe paṇaśatam kumbhe kumbhaśatam ityājīvanti*, VIII. 4). To meet this evil, "merchants who conspire either to prevent the sale of merchandise or to sell or purchase commodities at higher prices shall be fined 1,000 *paṇas*" (*vaidehakānām vā sambhūya paṇyam avaruddhatām anargheṇa vikrīṇatām krīṇatām vā sataśraṃ daṇḍaḥ*, IV. 2). *Yājñavalkya* also imposes the highest amercement "for traders combining to maintain price to the prejudice of labour and artisans, although knowing the rise or fall of prices" or "to obstruct the sale of a commodity by demanding a wrong price, or for selling it" (II. 549 f.). *Viṣṇu* ordains the same punishments for a company of merchants who prevent the sale of a commodity by selling it under its price, and for those of a company who sell an article for more than its worth (V. 125 f.). "The sale or purchase should be conducted at the price which is fixed by the king, the surplus made therefrom is understood to be the legal profit of traders."

That these well-meaning efforts of the state were lost upon the designing merchants is further proved by the fact that the state itself fell in line with the same tactics.

As owner and controller of vast state manufactures, the king was to corner the goods and raise prices by artificial means to increase the profit. "That merchandise which is widely distributed shall be centralised and the price enhanced. When the enhanced rate becomes popular, another rate shall be declared."

Yacca paṇyaṃ pracūraṃ syāt tadekikṛtyārgham āropayet. Prāpte'rghe vārghāntaram kārayet, II, 16. The state is also to take freely the advantage of the rise in prices of its merchandise due to bidding among buyers (krayasamgharṣe, II. 6).

### *Big and small trade*

Thus the state in the conception of the Arthaśāstra plays well the part of the scheming cartel. The transition from free bargain to cornering and price inflation accompanied the growth of large industries and business in the commercial cities, which kept customers at their mercy.<sup>1</sup> And since the old law still prevailed that a price once fixed holds good, fair or unfair, that a transaction cannot be revoked (Rv. IV. 29. 9),<sup>2</sup> it weighed more heavily on the customer than on the seller. The saving grace of the system was that it bears no comparison with the modern American parallel in the sphere of its influence. Almost the whole of rural areas and a large part of urban business were outside the sinister hold of monopolists. Small trade still controlled a big share of the country's business and

1 A very early evidence of how fodder grass is cornered by a speculator is in Jātaka, I. 121.

2 Cf. the transaction of the Jetavana. Later legists qualify this rule. vr. XVIII. 5 : Nār. IX. 2 f.

they in turn were freely exploited by the customers as well as by the big businessmen.

### *Standard of living*

In a free market dominated to a great extent by the 'fish-ethics' and with the fragmentary and biased data as presented, it is impossible to estimate the cost of living of any class of people with regard to a particular time and place with any approximation to accuracy. We have no price figures for the basic commodities of consumption, none for the staples like wheat, barley or rice. Prices were always and everywhere fluctuating and to make the confusion worse confounded the coins, viz., the *paṇa* or the *kārṣāpaṇa*, the *māṣa* or the *māṣaka* varied in their exchange value from place to place. Only the names of metallic tokens are found to be universal; their ratios are not uniform, their metallic contents differ and hence their purchasing power even for the same actual price. We may only just compare without dogmatising the status of a water-carrier who plans his festive mirth with 1 *māṣaka* or a grass-cutter who sells his bundle for the same price with the weaver of *Kāśī* whose fabric sells with the king at a fancy price if not exactly at the round number 100,000 *kahāpaṇas*.

## CHAPTER III

### THE METRIC SYSTEMS : DISORDER IN MARKET

Fluidity of weights and measures. Standard weights. Linear measures. Square measures. Fluctuation between places and times,

Dishonest dealings. False scales, coins, and measures. State as an exemplar. The malpractices and fines. Adulteration. The sinister buyer. From chaos to order.

For commodities sold by weight and measurement, price was a still more indeterminate factor. For like coins, weights and measures varied in their standards and ratios from place to place.

#### *Standard weights*

References are very common in Pali and Sanskrit literature and inscriptions to standard weights like *pala*, *droṇa*, *āḍhaka*, *prastha*, *khāri*, etc., in the measurement of foodcrops and other eatables. A few tables are available giving their metric relations.

TABLE I

4 māgadhapattha	=1 kosalapattha	4 kudumba	=1 prastha
4 kosalapattha	=1 āḷhaka	4 prastha	=1 āḍhaka
4 āḷhaka	=1 doṇa	4 āḍhaka	=1 droṇa
4 doṇa	=1 mānikā	16 droṇa	=1 vāri
4 mānikā	=1 khāri		
		20 droṇa	=1 kumbha
		10 kumbha	=1 vaha

—Paramatthajotikā on Sut. p., 123

—Sārattappakāsinī on Sn. I 150

—Arthasāstra, II, 19.

TABLE II

10 guṇja	=1 māṣa	10 māṣa or 5 g	=1 suvarṇamāṣa
10 māṣa	=1 karṣa	16 suvarṇamāṣa	=1 suvarṇa or karṣa
10 karṣa	=1 padārdha	4 karṣa	=1 pala
10 padārdha	=1 prastha	88 gaurasarṣapa	=1 rūpyamāṣaka
		16 rūpyamāṣaka	=1 dharaṇa
5 prastha	=1 āḍhaka	20 taṇṣula	=1 vajradharaṇa
20 armaṇa	=1 khārikā		

—Arthaśāstra, II. 19.

8 rati	=1 māṣā
10 maṣā	=1 suvarṇa

—Sukranīti, II. 775-78.

Buddhaghosa's table corresponds very fairly with that of the Arthaśāstra. In the Mahābhārata, the *prastha* is a small measure of barley made up of 4 *kuḷavas* (XIV. 89. 32). The small *prastha* of Magadha may well be equated with the *kudumba* or *kuḷava* and the *khāri* with the *vāri*. The table of the Śukranīti differs conspicuously, 1 *āḍhaka* being equal to 5 *prasthas* instead of 4, and 1 *khari* equal to 160 *āḍhakas* instead of 64. But then the Śukranīti is a much later work and it itself admits that "these measures differ with countries."

The second table of the Arthaśāstra, collated with the Smṛtis (Manu, VIII. 134-37 ; Viṣ. IV. 7-10), stands as

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5 <i>guñja</i> , <i>kṛṣṇala</i> , <i>rati</i> or <i>gaurasarṣapa</i> —1 <i>māṣa</i>	
16 <i>māṣa</i>	= 1 <i>karṣa</i> <sup>1</sup>
4 <i>karṣa</i>	= 1 <i>pala</i>

Now 1 *guñja* seed or *rati* weighs about 1·75 grains

∴ 1 *pala* =  $1\frac{1}{4} \times 320$  grains or 560 grains

The ratio between the *pala* and any of the standards in Table I is nowhere given except for a somewhat confusing statement in the *Arthaśāstra* that.

200 *palas* = 1 *droṇa* of royal dues (*āyamānam*).

And  $187\frac{1}{2}$  *palas* = 1 *droṇa* of royal sales (*vyavahārikam*).

If the *vyavahārika droṇa* is the standard *droṇa* of Table I, *Arthaśāstra* 19, then the *āyamāna droṇa* in which the royal incomes are measured is appreciated by 6·4 per cent. Conversely, if the *āyamāna* is the real *droṇa* then the measure used for disposal of king's merchandise is depreciated by 6·25 per cent.<sup>2</sup> Thus

1 *droṇa āyamāna* = 200 *palas* =  $560 \times 200$  grs. = 16 lbs.

1 *droṇa vyavahārika* =  $187\frac{1}{2}$  *palas* =  $560 \times 187\frac{1}{2}$  grs. = 15 lbs.

If the *Arthaśāstra* clue is accepted, 1 *droṇa* equates roughly either with 8 *srs.* or with  $7\frac{1}{2}$  *srs.* The shot is not very wide of the mark since during Rāma's prosperous reign cows are said to be yielding 1 *droṇa* of milk each

1 According to the *Arthaśāstra* 88 *gaurasarṣapas* instead of 80 make the weight of a *dharāṇa*, i. e., one *karṣa*. The margin may be explained by the fact<sup>2</sup> that according to the *Arthaśāstra*, i. e., in the place of its composition, the weight of the white mustard seed was slightly below that of a *guñja* seed.

2 Such manipulation with metric units to raise the margin of king's profit is freely acknowledged in the *Arthaśāstra*.

(droṇadughā, Mbh. XII, 29. 58) and 8 srs. is an extraordinarily high but by no means impossible yield for a good cow. 1 *āḍhaka* on this assumption is about 2 srs. and 1 *prastha*,  $\frac{1}{2}$  a seer. The proportion between the *āḍhaka* and the *prastha* does not discord with that in a Mathura inscription of Huvīṣka's time (year 28) where an endowment is made to provide the destitute with a daily allowance of 3 *āḍhakas* of groat (*saktu*), 1 *prastha* of salt, 1 *prastha* of *saku* (?) and 3 *ghaṭaka* and 5 *mallaka* of green vegetables (*haritakalāpaka*). The proportion between salt and groat works out at somewhat less than 1 : 12, allowing a portion of salt for the vegetables.<sup>1</sup>

The surmise may therefore be hazarded that the following weight standards, more or less uniformly, prevailed in the Ganges valley in the centuries near about the Christian era :

TABLE I

4 kudumba or kuḷava or māgadhaprastha (=1/8 sr.)	=1 prastha (=1/2 sr.)
4 prastha	... .. =1 āḍhaka (=2 srs)
4 āḍhaka	... .. =1 droṇa (=8 srs.)
16 droṇa	... .. =1 khāri or vāri (=128 srs.)

The smaller units, on the basis of the Śāstra data may be compiled into :

1 Cf. the Muṇḍeśvarī Inscription of Udayasena in Shahabad district of the early 7th century where is recorded a grant of 2 *prasthas* of rice and 1 *pala* of oil to the god Maṇḍeśwara. On our computation assuming 200 *pala*=1 *droṇa*. 2 *prastha*=21 *pala* and the ratio between oil and rice is 1 : 21 which is quite satisfactory. But the oil may also have been meant for illumination.

TABLE II

5 guñjai kṛṣṇala rati or gaurasaraṣpa	(=1·75 grs.)	=1 māṣa (8·75 grs.)
16 māṣa	... ..	=1 karṣa (140 grs.)
4 karṣa	... ..	=1 pala (560 grs.)
12·5 pala	... ..	=1 ptastha (1 lb.)

None of these agree with their corresponding names in the Śukranīti. But Sukra saves us by saying that not only these measures differ with countries but even their ratios vary for particular commodities. For example, in the case of an elephant's value 5 *rati*=1*māṣa* quite in agreement with our Table II. Several other weights are cursorily referred to in the Pali works and in the inscriptions e.g., the *ammaṇa* (Jāt. V. 297; Mv. IV. 1. 19; Mil. 102),<sup>1</sup> *acchera* (Jāt. V. 385),<sup>2</sup> *pasata* (Mv. VIII. 11),<sup>3</sup> *nālika* (Sn. I. 81), *ghaṭaka* and *mallaka* in the Mathura Inscription of Huvīṣka of the year 28. With the present state of our knowledge these names remain elusive to us.

### Linear measures

Linear measures are less perplexing. The only available list is that of the Arthaśāstra and it is self-explanatory in several details, besides in certain portions being corroborated by the Śukranīti. It goes (II. 20):—

1 *Armaṇa* of Sanskrit.

2 Cf. Marathi 'acchera' = ½ seer.

3 =2 *pala* according to Sanskrit lexicographers.

TABLE III

8 paramānu	...	...	...	=1 rathacakraviprud
8 rathacakraviprud	...	...	...	=1 likṇā
8 likṣā	...	...	...	=1 yūkāmadhya (.01 in.)
8 yūkāmadhy	...	...	...	=1 yavamadhya (.09 in.)
8 yavamadhya	...	...	...	=1 angula (.71 in)
4 angula	...	...	...	=1 dhanurgraha (3 in.)
8 angula	...	...	...	=1 dhanurmuṣṭi (1 in.)
12 angula	...	...	...	=1 vitasti or chāyāpauruṣa (9 in.)
14 angula	...	...	...	=1 śama, śala parivaya or pada (10.1 in.)
2 vitasti	...	...	...	=1 āratni or prājāpatya hasta (18 in)
2 vitasti+1dhanurgraha	...	...	...	=1 hasta in measuring balanceai cubic measures and pasture lands (21 in)
2 vitasti+1dhanurmuṣṭi...	...	...	...	=1 kiṣku or kaṁsa (24 in=.2 ft)
42 angula	...	...	...	=1 kiṣku of sawyers & blacksmithsai used in measuring camp grounds (2ft. 7.1 in.)
14 angula	...	...	...	=1 hasta for measuring timber orest (3 ft. 4.1 in.)
4 āratni	...	...	...	=1 danda, dhanu, nālika or pauruṣa (1 ft.
108 angula	...	...	...	=1 gārhapatya dhanu measuring roads and fort walls. =1 pauruṣa measuring sacrificial altars (1 ft. 1 in.)
1 kaṁsa	...	...	...	=1 danda measuring brahmadēya land (12 ft.)
10 danda	...	...	...	=1 rajju (10 ft.)
1 rajju	...	...	...	=1 parideśa (110 ft.)
3 rajju	...	...	...	=1 nivartana (180 ft.)
3 rajju+1 danna	...	...	...	=1 bāhu (191 ft.)
1,000 dhanu	...	...	...	=1 garuṣa (or kroṣai cpm.) (1 mi. 140 yds.)
garuta	...	...	...	=1 yojana (4 mi. 910 yds).

The metric equivalents in English are made on the assumption that 1 *hasta* or cubit=18 in. This gives  $\frac{1}{3}$  in. for the *angula* or the breadth of the mid-joint of the middle finger of an adult man. The breadth of a barley corn is slightly less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. and of a louse  $\frac{1}{10}$  in. At the longer end of the table, a *daṇḍa* or the ascetic's rod, a *dhanu* or the archer's bow and a *puruṣa* or the full-grown average man is 6 ft. high. The relations between the *angula*, *vitasti* and *āratni* and that between the *garuta* and *yojana* stand certified by Moggallana's *Abhidhānappadīpikā*. In the *Śukranīti* equations are cursorily thrown in from two different scales which may be compiled into the following :

Śukranīti ( I. 387-414 )		Arthaśāstra	
Brahmā	Manu		
8 yavodara =1 angula	5 yavodara =1 angula	=8 yavamadhya	=1 angul
4 angula =1 kara	24 angula =1 kara	=24 angula	=1 hasta
4 kara =1 danda	5 kara =1 danda	=4 hasta or āratni	=1 danda
25 danda =1 nivartana	25 danda =1 nivartana	30 danda	=1 nivartana
25 nivartana =1 parivartana	25 nivartana	=1 parivartana	
5,000 kara =1 krośa	4,000 kara =1 krośa	4,000 hasta	=1 garuta or krośa
(2 pari.)			

It will be observed that for measures below the *danḥa* the Brahman scale agrees with the Arthaśāstra but above the *daṇḍa* its *nivartana* is less by 20 cubits and its *krośa* longer by 1,000 cubits. The proportion between the cubit and the *krośa* is the same in Manu and the Arthaśāstra, and between the *angula* and the cubit, same in all the three scales.

The *āratni* prevailed as far as in the land of Kuru and in the Punjab. It is mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* (VII.

176. 19) and in the Milinda (85). The Yona king could clear 8 *aratni* with a jump, i.e., 12 ft.—quite an average record for a good athlete. The *yojana*, as derived from applied tests from references in Pāli literature, appears however as a somewhat longer distance than  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles obtained from the *Arthaśāstra*.<sup>1</sup>

### Square measure

Square measures lead again into a hopeless maze.. The *Arthaśāstra* gives no tables for these and the only available data are a few cryptic expressions in the *Sukranīti* (I. 386-417).

768 yavodara (Brahmā)	}	=( area of ) 1 daṇḍa
600 yavodara (Manu)		
625 daṇḍa		=1 nivartana
1 bhuja or side of a parivartana		=25 daṇḍa
1 parivartana of cultivable land		=4 bhuja (a square with each side=25 daṇḍa) =625 daṇḍa (sq.)
2,500 parivartana or		
25,000,000 sq. cubits		1 krośa

Strangely, 768 or 600 *yavodara* which=1 linear *daṇḍa* is also=1 sq. *daṇḍa*, while 1 sq. *nivartana* (25 *daṇḍa*)<sup>2</sup> = 625 sq. *daṇḍa*. As a square measure the *parivartana* works out to be the same as the *nivartana*. But on what calculation 1 *parivartana* equates with 10,000 sq. cubits and 2,500 *parivartana* with 1 sq. *krośa* remains unknown. No clues are available elsewhere to resolve these mysteries. The only

1. See the tabulated list in Rhys Davids : *On the Ancient Coins and Measures of Ceylon*. p. 16.

accountable and intelligible equation of this table is that

TABLE IV

1 sq. *nivartana*  
(or possibly) 1 sq. *parivartana* } = 625 sq. *danḍa* = 25 *danḍa* × 25 *danḍa*

But even this square *nivartana* does not correspond with the Arthaśāstra's linear *nivartana* inasmuch as it is 30 and not 25 *danḍa*. The square *nivartana*, on the basis of different linear systems, works out to

Brahmā	Manu	Arthaśāstra
25 <i>danḍa</i> × 25 <i>danḍa</i> = 100 <i>kara</i> × 100 <i>kara</i>	25 <i>danḍa</i> × 25 <i>danḍa</i> = 125 <i>kara</i> × 125 <i>kara</i>	30 <i>danḍa</i> × 30 <i>danḍa</i> = 120 <i>hasta</i> × 120 <i>hasta</i>
= $\frac{1800 \times 1800}{144 \times 9}$ sq. yds.	= $\frac{2250 \times 2250}{144 \times 9}$ sq. yds.	= $\frac{2160 \times 2160}{144 \times 9}$ sq. yd.
= 2500 sq. yds.	= 3906·25 sq. yds.	= 3600 sq. yds.
= 5165 acre.	= 8071 acre.	= 7438 acre.

This *nivartana* is very commonly used in land measurements, particularly in the Nasik charters of the Sātavāhanas. In one of the Gadval Plates of Vikramāditya I (674 A.D.)<sup>1</sup> a village is said to be measuring 50 *nivartana* which, according to Table IV, works out to 25·825 or 40·355 or 37·190 acres or between 1/25 and 1/16 of a sq. mile. Other measures are found to be in use outside those in the Śukranīti's table. In the Gupta and Vākāṭaka inscriptions *bhūmi* is the current measure about which no clue is given. In the Ganesgaḍ Plate of Dhruvasena I (Baroda, Gupta era 207), the *khaṇḍa* is a measure of land, 8 *khaṇḍas* containing 300 *pādāvarta*

which is explained by the commentator on the Kātyāyana Śrauta Sūtra as square foot.<sup>2</sup> But inscriptions from Kathiawaḍ dating in the 6th century<sup>3</sup> give the measurement of cultivable fields as 180, 120 and 130 *pādāvarta*, of a pond (*vāpī*) as 32 *pādāvarta* and of irrigation wells as 16 and 12 *pādāvarta* showing that the measure was much larger than a square foot. Thus the *pādāvarta* like other square measures varied in different times and places. The *khaṇḍa* is a piece of land in which a *khaṇḍuga* of seed (Gadval Plates ; Inscriptions of early Ganga kings in Mysore) is sown. The *khaṇḍuga* is an unknown standard but there are other known standards of weight applied to land measurements ; e.g., fields in which 1, 2 or 3 *khāri* or 5,...14 *drona* of seed are sown.<sup>4</sup>

#### *False scales, coins and measures*

Dishonest dealings ran rampant in the market and false scales, false weights and false measures were the most convenient methods. The glorious days are worth yearning for when merchants did not sell articles with false weights and measures (*kūṭamānaiḥ*, Mbh. I. 64. 22), a practice characteristic of the damned Kali age (III. 187. 53 ; XII. 228. 70). *Tulākūṭa* and *mānakūṭa* are in the list of disapproved gifts (Mil. 279 ; cf. Viṣ. LIV. 15). Gotama abstains from cheating with *tulā*, *kamsa* and *māna* i.e., with scales, coins and measures (Dn. I. i. 10 ; An. II, 209 ; V. 205 f. ; Sn. V. 474.). In a more comprehensive list, the Sukranīti enumerates,—“Deceit by means of false weights

2. E. I., III. p. 323. fn. 3.

3. E. I., XI. 5. 9.

4. Also I *kulya*,—in the Almora district assigned to the 6th or 7th century, E. I., XIII. 7 B.

and measures, false and counterfeit coins, unscientific medicinal extracts and other preparations, passing off of base metals for genuine and high class things and food adulteration, all these channels of dishonest transactions are to be checked" (I. 590-92).

### *Control of unfair business*

According to the Arthaśāstra the state itself is to derive some profit by using different weights and measures from those current in the market, i.e., higher ones for royal purchases and levies and lower ones for sales of royal merchandise. But the same work, while setting up a bad example in the state, enters into long philippics against the subjects and prescribes a fine of 200 *paṇa* for those who cause to a merchant or purchaser the loss of even  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a *pana* by substituting with tricks of hand (*hastadoṣeṇācārataḥ*), false weights and measures or other kinds of inferior articles (*tulā-mānāntaram arghavarṇāntaram vā dhārakasya māpakasya vā*). The class of merchants who lead in these underhand methods are the goldsmiths adopting false balances (*tulā-viṣama*), removal (*apasāraṇa*), dropping (*visrāvaṇa*), folding (*peṭaka*) and confounding (*pinka*) with several ingenious tricks described in detail under each head (II. 14). Another practice was to pass bad articles as good ones. "The sale or mortgage of articles such as timber, iron, jewels, robes, skins, earthenware, threads, fibrous garments (*valka*), woollen clothes (*romamayam*) as superior though they are really inferior (*jātamityajātam*) shall be punished with a fine eight times the value of the article" (IV.2; Yāj. II. 245f.). "The sale or mortgage of inferior as superior commodities (*sārabhāṇḍam ityasāra-*

bhāṇḍam ), articles of some other locality as produce of a particular locality ( tājātām ityatajjātām ), adulterated things ( rādhāyuktam ), deceitful mixtures ( upādhiyuktam ), dexterously substituted articles to those just sold ( samutparivartitam ) shall be punished with a fine of 54 *pana* and shall make good the loss." "Those who conspire to lower the quality of works of artisans, or to obstruct their sale or purchase shall be fined 1,000 *pana* ( kārūṣilpinām karmaguṇāpakarṣam ājīvaṃ vikrayaṃ krayo-padhānaṃ vā sambhūya samutthāpayatām sahasraṃ daṇḍaḥ )."<sup>1</sup> "Adulteration of grains, oils, alkalis, salts, scents, and medicinal articles with similar articles of no quality ( dhānya-sneha-kṣāra-lavaṇa-gandha-bhaiṣajya-dravyāṇām samavarṇāpadhāne ) is fined with 12 *panas*" ( Artha. IV. 2. )

### Adulteration

Adulteration was very common in business dealing's Yājñavalkya repeats ( II. 244 ) the injunction of the Arthasāstra and Vṛhaspati lays down: "A merchant who conceals the blemish of an article which he is selling, or mixes bad and good articles together, or sells ( old articles ) after repairing them, shall be compelled to give the double quantity ( to the purchaser ) and pay a fine equal ( in amount ) to the value of the article." ( XXII. 7, 13 ). Manu censures adulteration of grain ( XI. 50 ). In the Jātakas it is a current malpractice ( 1. 220 ) and those who mixed good grain with chaff and sold it to a buyer are presented as Tantalus in hell.

1. The worst offence in business transactions is to combine into a conspiracy to drive away from the market a competitor by unfair disparagement of his produce or by blocking his sales and purchases. Com.

Ye suddhadhaññaṃ palāpena missaṃ  
asuddhakammā kayiṇo dadanti VI. 110

*The dishonest customer*

Sometimes the haggling buyers beat the seller in a sinister bargain in the market place, and are hooked like fishes in purgatory in consequence of their misdeed.

Ye keci santhānagatā manussā  
agghena aggham kayam hāpayanti  
kuṭena kuṭam dhanalobhahetu  
cannaṃ vāricaraṃ vadhāya VI. 113

Com.—agghena . agghanti, taṃ ,taṃ aggaṃ lañcam  
gahetva hāthiassādīnaṃ vā jātārūparajatādīnaṃ vā tesaṃ  
tesaṃ saviññānakānaṃ aviññānakānaṃ aggaṃ hāpenti itaraṃ  
paṇṇāsaṃ tehi saddhiṃ vibhajitvā gaṇhanti.

Thus not only the buyer and the seller but sometimes also the middleman or the price expert has his share of the spoils in a market dominated by unscrupulous pursuit of wealth.

*The market : from chaos to order*

There could not be any clearer proof of straying into unfair business than the heavy fines imposed by statesmen and law-givers and the damnation of Kali or threat of perdition held out before the public by those who stood for ethical values even in the pursuits of gain. It is because of this widespread anarchy that Manu has to confess that pursuits of trafficking and usury are by themselves a mixture of truth and falsehood (satyāṇṛta, IV. 6). Traces of order were however emerging here and there. Every market had its standard weights and measures as evident from the current lists of names, though they fluctuated

place to place and time to time introducing an element of chaos in inter-*janapada* commerce. The Arthaśāstra conceives of a Superintendent of Commerce (*paṇyādhyakṣa*) to supervise weights and measures and prevent deception with false weights and scales (II, 14). Of the Maurya Empire little is known about the function of "the great officers of state" who "have charge of the market"; but about the fourth body of the municipality of Pāṭaliputra it is definitely said that it superintended trade and commerce, its members having charge of weights and measures (Str. XV. i. 50).

## CHAPTER IV

### OVERLAND TRADE AND TRADE ROUTES

Inland trade. The five road systems. (1) North south : Pratiṣṭhāna-Śravastī, Ancillary routes, Ujjayinī-Bhṛgukaccha-Tagara. (2) Southwest-southeast : Bhṛgu-kaccha-Kauśāmbī-Tāmraliptī. (3) East-west : Pāṭaliputra-Pataia. (4) East-north-west : Campā-Puṣkalāvati. (5) Southwest-northwest : Bhṛgukaccha-Puṣkalāvati. Central Asiatic routes. Insecurity.

Road-making and maintenance. Transit. Dangers of overland trade. Police,—civil and mercenary. Difficulties of carāvan journey. The motive force of gain.

#### *Inter-janapada trade*

The semi-anarchical business conditions did not stand in the way of inter-state commerce. The self-sufficiency and isolation of *gāmas* and *janapadas* were broken by active trade and long highways of commerce intersecting between them. The specialisation and localisation of particular industries in particular *janapadas* were sufficient urge for exchange of their products stimulated by a free market in which profit to the tune of 400 per cent. was not an unexpected hit. Long lines of caravan plied along the cross-country roads linking into a common market the horse of Sind, the wool of the Himalayas, the muslin of the East and the pearl of the South.

#### *The road systems*

The main overland routes resolve into five systems, linking the middle Ganges valley (a) with the upper

Godāvarī valley and the south-western coast, (b) with the lower Ganges valley and the eastern coast, (c) with the Sindhu and the Indus delta, (d) with the Indus valley and Gandhāra. Each of these systems had extensions to distant foreign countries to the east and to the west, the first and second by sea, the third and fourth by land, the fifth by land on one side and by sea on the other.

(1) North-South : *Pratiṣṭhāna-Srāvasti*

The central route of the first system is what was followed by the pupils of Bāvari accurately described in the *Sūttanipāta*,—i.e., from *Pratiṣṭhāna* of *Alaka* to *Māhissati*, *Ujjeni*, *Gonaddha*, *Vedisā*, *Vanasabhaya*, *Kosāmbi*, *Sāketa*, *Sāvatthi*, *Setavya* and *Kapilavatthu*. Southward from *Kapilavatthu* and within the middle Ganges valley this route was extended to *Kusinārā*, *Mandira*, *Pāvā* the city of wealth, *Vesāli* of *Magadha* and to the beautiful Rock Temple (*Pāsānika Cetya*), the destination of the party (Vv. 1011-13). It went farther south to *Pāṭaligāma* (later *Pāṭaliputta*), *Nālanda*, *Rājagaha* and probably *Gayā*. During his last ministering tour from *Rājagaha* to *Kusinārā*, Buddha crossed the Ganges at *Pāṭaligāma* and made eleven haltings besides that at *Vesāli*, at *gāmas* and *nagaras* (Dn. II. Suttanta XVI. 81 ff). Parts of this high-road are noticed elsewhere, e.g., that (*addhānamagga*) from *Kusinārā* to *Pāvā* (Jāt. VI. 19 ; Dn. XVI. iv. 26) and that between *Sāketa* and *Sāvatthi* (Mv. I. 66. 1) traversed by king *Pasenadi* of *Kosala* in relays of seven carriages (Mn. 23 ; Sn IV. 373). Probably the great road-construction between *Ayodhyā* (*Sāketa*) and the Ganges en route the *Daṇḍaka* forest described in the *Rāmāyaṇa* (II. 80) covered part of this trunk road.

*Ancillary routes : Ujjayinī-Bhārukaccha-Tagara*

The main route had its branches and off-shoots. The *niṣāda* country located in the north of Avanti at the foot of the Vindhyas had its connecting roads with Kośala and Vidarbha (Mbh. III. 61. 21-23) and with Cedi<sup>1</sup> (64. 131) along which caravans are found plying. The first must have converged with the great Ujjayinī-Ayodhyā road and the other two were possibly linked with this through Ujjayinī. But the foremost ancillary routes of the Pratiṣṭhāna-Śrāvastī system were those connecting its northern and southern portions to the great western seaport of Bhārukaccha. According to the Periplus much cotton cloth was brought down to Barygaza from the metropolis of Abiria called Minnagara or the city of the Sakas (i.e., Ujjayinī) (47). From Ozene "are brought down all things needed for the welfare of the country about Barygaza and many things for our trade: agate and carnelian, Indian muslin, and mallow cloth, and much ordinary cloth" (48). In the south Bhārukaccha was connected by means of cart tracks with the Godāvarī road leading to Pratiṣṭhāna and Tagara. "There are brought down to Barygaza from these places by wagons and through great tracks without roads (because of the hills) from Paithana carnelian in great quantity, and from Tagara much common cloth, all kinds of muslin and mallow cloth and other merchandise brought there locally from the regions along the sea-coast (Eastern coast)" (51). These western extensions of the main road became busy with traffic after Bhārukaccha eclipsed Roruka as the chief outlet of Indian goods for the western world.

<sup>1</sup> Located by Pargiter on the bank of the Jumna, south-east from the Chambal towards Karwi. Its capital Śuktimatī is located some where near Banda.

(2) *Southwest-south-east : Bhrgukaccha-Kauśāmbi-Tāmralipti*

The terminus of the eastern route was the seaport of Tāmralipti. It met the Pratiṣṭhāna-Śrāvasti road at Kauśāmbi *via* Gayā and Bārāṇasi. Traders seen on journey from Benares to Ujjain must have taken this course (Jāt. II. 248). There was much traffic by boat also along the Ganges through the riparian cities of Campā, Pāṭaliputra and Bārāṇasi (Jāt. II. 112 ; IV. 5-17, 159 ; VI. 32-35). The muslins of Vaṅga, Puṇḍra and Kāśī reached Ujjayinī along these land and river routes to be exported abroad from Bhārukaccha. The Tāmralipti road and the lower Ganges must have had feeding routes opening up the interior of Bengal. There is very little concrete evidence of the overland trade to the east of Campā and Tāmralipti.

(3) *East-west : Pātaliputra Patala*

The east-west route ran between Pāṭaliputra and the mouth of the Indus after the city had acquired imperial eminence. It had a nucleus between Magadha and Sovīra from earlier times (VVA. 336, 370) possibly reaching Roruka the old seaport situated somewhere on the gulf of Cutch.<sup>1</sup> This is the connecting road from *pubbanta* to *aparanta* through which merchants are frequently seen plying in the Jātakas. Between Kosāmbi and Bārāṇasi it converged with the Kosāmbi-Tāmralipti road. Beyond that its exact course is not known.<sup>2</sup> From the Delta it continued through Iran to the west. Horses from Sind and from Iran

1 Cunningham locates this in Alor of Sind.

2 The *Addhānamagga* between Mathurā and Verañjā was probably a part of this system (An. II. 57) ; the location of the latter is not known.

(Kosmas—quoted in McCrindle) were imported along this road to the Gangetic cities.

(4) *East-northwest : Campā-Puṣkalāvati*

The royal road from Pāṭaliputra to the north-west frontier is specifically mentioned by Megasthenes (Str. XV. i. II). The main body of this road existed long before the rise of the Maurya Empire, in the palmy days of Videha linking Mithilā with Gandhāra and Kashmir (Jāt. III. 365). Passing through the city of Aritṭhapura and possibly the Pañcāla city of Kāmpilya (VI. 419, 463), it crossed the Madra city of Śākala (Mil. 16 f.) and met Taxila and Puṣklāvati in Gandhāra. To the south-east it extended from Mithilā to the Anga city of Campā (VI. 32) thus linking up the farthest east to the north-western borders of India.

Further details and haltings of this Campā-Mithilā-Kāmpilya-Śākala route may be gleaned from the course taken by the messengers from Kośala to Kekaya in the Rāmāyaṇa. Starting from Ayodhyā along river Mālinī flowing between the country of Aparatāla in the west and the janapada of Pralamba in the north, they forded the Ganges at Hastināpur, traversed the Pañcāla country and proceeded westward through the heart of Kurujāṃgala. They next crossed the river Śāradaṇḍa, entered the city of Kulingā, left behind the twin villages Abhikāla and Tejohbhivavana, crossed the river Ikṣumatī, passed through the region of Bālhika along rivers Vipāsā, Śālmālī, etc., to the city of Girivraja,—capital of Kekaya (II. 68. 12ff).<sup>1</sup> This is the same road stretching between

1 Bharata takes a shorter route through the countryside and wild regions presumably because he was in a hurry.

Pāṭaliputra and Kājaṃgala at the foot of the Himalaya s which a *seṭṭhi* with 500 wagons is seen crossing (Mil. 16 f.). Horse-dealers from Uttarāpatha travelled by this road to Benares (Jāt. II. 31, 237). The Himalayan products of skin, wool, edible spices, precious stones and gold bound for the plains, took this road by its northern branches.

(5) Southwest-northwest : *Bhṛgukaccha-Puṣkalāvati*.

The fifth and the last road system of the north connected Bhṛgukaccha with Gandhāra. The earliest reference to this is in the *Periplus* where it is found extended up to Puṣkalāvati (47) whence it had further connexions with Kaśyapapura or Kashmir, Paropanisus or the Hindukush, Kabul and Scythia, bringing the spikenard of these places for export through Barygaza (48). The exact course of this Bhārukaccha-Puṣkalāvati road is not known.

*From Puṣkalāvati to Middle East*

The east-north west and the west-north west road systems met at Puṣkalāvati and thence they converged to proceed through the Pamirs to Bactria. Raw silk, silk yarn and silk cloth thus found their way from China through Bactria to Barygaza and to Damirica by way of the river Ganges (64). From Bactria the road coursed through Central Asia to the west. "People have been conveyed from the Oxus through the Caspian into the Cyrus and Indian merchandise can be brought by land to Phasis in Pontus in five days at most" (Pliny, VI. 17), Aristoboulos also avers "that large quantities of Indian merchandise are conveyed by the Oxus to the Hyrcanian (Caspian) Sea

and are transferred from thence into Albania by the Cyrus and through the adjoining countries to the Euxine." (Str. XI. vii. 3). This north-western route leading from Gandhāra to the Middle East was much preferred to the western route from Indus through Persia to the Levant. In the first quarter of the second century B. C. the Greek invasion from Bactria through the Kabul valley to the Jumna and a century later the Śaka invasion from Seistan into the country of the lower Indus took these routes in the north-west and entrenched into a position commanding the great central Indian routes from Ujjayinī.

#### *Insecurity of the Bactrian route*

The north-western route beyond Puṣkalāvati, because of these constant war and tribal movements, was not very hospitable to international trade. The caravan traffic of these regions was not regular but incidental, subject to depredations of savage tribes. It was much reduced by Parthian wars in the first century A.D.<sup>1</sup> giving a tremendous impetus to sea-borne trade from Barygaza. The road to China was equally unsafe until the subjugation of Turkestan by that empire. "The land of This is not easy of access ; few men can come from there and seldom"

1 "The Parthians had done what they could to control and organise it and to levy tribute on the Roman merchants, but they had not controlled it to the eastward. The existence of a unified power (from 45 A. D. under Kadphishes, I) in the Indus valley and Afghanistan made possible a regular trade from the Ganges to the Euphrates. The rapid growth of such trade is indicated by the coinage of the Yueh-Chi kings in India (struck in imitation of Rome)"—Schoff, p. 187.

(Peri. 64).<sup>1</sup> With the rise of the empire of Kanishka, trade with Mesopotamia and China became more secure and active.

*Road-making and maintenance*

The trunk roads were taken care of and ferries maintained (Mv. III. 20 f.) by the successive *janapadas* through which they passed or where they occurred. Bridges are nowhere mentioned. The shade of trees on both sides of the roads, wells for drinking water to which Emperor Aśoka gave much attention (R. E. II ; P. E. VII),<sup>2</sup> relays of horses of carriages for travellers at intervening stations and rest-houses (*āvasath āgāra*) or choultries set up by the charitable millionaires or by village or municipal bodies. In the Maurya Empire they were marked with signboards noting turnings and distances at intervals of 'ten stades' (Str. XV. i. 5). The *Rāmāyaṇa* gives a graphic picture of a bold road-making project. Soil-specialists, surveyors and

<sup>1</sup> For land-routes between China and India, see Schoff, pp. 268 ff. Regarding Indo-Chinese trade he observes, "With the rise of the Kushan dynasty in the north-west and their relations towards their former home on the Chinese border it was natural that the communication by the Turkestan routes should increase. While the military success of China did not begin until 73 A.D., it is known that the Chinese Emperor Ming-Ti (who ruled from 58 to 75) introduced Buddhism into China by the invitation of two Indian Sramanas, Kāśyapa Mātanga and Bhārana, who arrived in 67 A.D. (Takakasu, I-tsing, Introduction p. xvii). Before such an invitation there must have been considerable activity on the part of the missionaries, then as now the forerunners of commerce." P. 275.

<sup>2</sup> ".....mankind has been blessed with many such blessings by the previous kings as by me."

carpenters were requisitioned, road-guards posted at places under construction. Forests were cleared, trees planted in sparsely vegetated places by the highway, ditches filled, hills levelled, tanks excavated and picturesque cities built on both sides of the road (II. 80).

*River routes : dangers of inland trade*

A fair part of the inland trade was carried along the rivers of the Ganges and the Jumna and the large number of tributaries descending into them the Himalayas and the Vindhyas. Boats plied for hire. Sometimes they ran express. Where a water-course could be availed of, the land-route was generally dispensed with. It was preferred to sail down from Benares to Tāmralipti despite the caravan-route (Jāt. IV. 15-17). Probably the water-routes were comparatively safer, easier, sometimes quicker and hence less expensive. The roads penetrated through hills and forests which were favourite resorts of beasts, robbers (Jāt. III. 403) and Yakkhas (III. 100). A caravan straggled in a forest by beasts and robbers is a choice analogy (*vyālataskara-saṃkīrṇe sārthahīnā yathavane*, Mbh. IX. 3. 13). A caravan of seafaring merchant on their way to sea, while resting in a mountain cave is attacked and exterminated by an infuriated elephant (XII. 169. 1 ff). In the unsettled civil conditions of the times there was no check to these depredations.

*Police : civil and professional*

The Maurya police for a time must have improved the conditions a little, and here and there wise statesmanship, alert of the importance of import and export trade came

into grips with the problem. But the measures touched only the fringe when effective communications were lacking and whole tribes had to depend on a marauding life. The situation gave rise to a typical institution of the age. Bands of caravan-guards cropped up on the same lines as robber gangs under the command of a *jetthaka* settling at the entrances of forests and hiring themselves out to passing caravans for safe escort.

Bodhisatta pañcapurisasataparivāro aṭavi-ārakkhikesu jetṭhako hutvā aṭavimukhe ekasmiṃ (gāme vāsaṃ) kappesi. So bhaṭiṃ gaḥetvā manusse aṭaviṃ atikkameti. Jāt. II. 332.

A wealthy Brāhmaṇa travelling from the East to the West (i.e., by the road between the Ganges valley and the Indus delta) with 500 wagons hired a convoy who lived at the entrance of the forest at 1,000 pieces. They were defeated and the Brāhmaṇa taken away by a man-eating monster. The men rose and gave a chase to preserve the sanctity of their contract and recovered their paymaster at the peril of their life (V. 471). Another caravan-leader who hired guards for the same amount (aṭavipālanam datvā) through a forest was in the same way faithfully defended by the warders against an ogre (V. 22).

A caravan journey was beset with other and more numerous difficulties. These are lucidly set forth in the Jātaka stories :

#### *Difficulties of caravan journey*

A caravan merchant when about a night's journey from his destination, after supper relieved the caravan

of the surplus wood and water. The pilot sat in the front cart. "But so long had he been without sleep that he was tired out and fell asleep, with the result that he did not mark that the oxen had turned round and were retracing their steps. All night the oxen kept on their way' but at dawn the pilot woke up, and, observing the disposition of the stars overhead shouted out, 'Turn the carts round! Turn the carts round!' And as they turned the carts round and were forming them into line, the day broke. 'Why, this is where we camped yesterday,' cried the people of the caravan. 'All our wood and water is gone, and we are 'lost.' So saying, they unyoked their carts and made a laager and spread the awning overhead; then each man flung himself down in despair beneath his own cart" (I. 108).

### *Impetus of gain*

The *aparanta* and the Gandhāra routes had to traverse the arid lands of Sind and Western Rajputana. In crossing the desert the caravans are said to travel only in the night and to be guided by a 'land-pilot' (*thalaniyyāmaka*), who, just like mariners, kept the night route by astronomical observations (I. 107). The traders knew no obstructions. They negotiated hills, forests and deserts, defied all predators human, animal and ethereal—not from any spirit of blind adventure but for love of gain. No wonder they bartered their goods for three or four times their value. The unprotected civil condition reacted on the market. It fits well with free bargain and speculative business.

## CHAPTER V

### SEABORNE TRADE AND TRADE ROUTES

Growth of maritime trade. Ship-building industry, Tonnage of ships. Freight charges. Professional crews and pilots. The compass and the crow. The seaport or *pattana*.

India in international trade. Mesopotamia ; the Euphrates route ; Iran, —imports and exports. The Mediterranean or Nile route ; Arabia, Socotra, Berbera, Arab monopoly in Red sea ; Egypt, development of Egyptian trade, Indo-Egyptian trade routes. Arab—Roman rivalry. Roman Empire, Indian goods in Roman market, exports and imports. Indo-Roman trade curve.

The Southern trade. The Tamil countries and Ceylon. Burma and Indonesia.

History of foreign trade. The Mauryas. The Sakas. The Andhras, Kaliṅgas and Vaṅgas. The Kuṣāṇas.

Dangers of the sea. Stories of shipwreck. The tidal bore at Cutch and Cambay. Piracy, the Koṅkan coast. The motive force of gain.

#### *Development of maritime trade*

While inland trade moved mainly along roads and rivers, foreign trade was carried across the seas. Evidences of bold sea-voyages come from the earliest literary references of the Rg-veda.<sup>1</sup> The early Smṛti works in laying these under severe strictures for Brāhmaṇas, only show a futile attempt to arrest a practice which had come to stay. Baudhāyana prescribes loss of caste to transgressors

1 For references, see R. K. Mukherji : *Indian Shipping*, pp. 53-55.

(samudrasaṃyānam, II. 1. 2. 2), and Maṇu excludes them from entertainment at the *śraddhas* (III. 158). But the former admits: "Now the customs peculiar to the North are, to deal in wool, to drink rum, to sell animals that have teeth in the upper and in the lower jaws; to follow the trade of arms, to go to sea" (I. i. 2. 4.)—a clear evidence of the commercial activities of the people of Sind and the Punjab across the Indian ocean. Expert voyagers (samudrayānakūśalāḥ) are recognised in Maṇu's code as respectable enough to be authorised to fix the rate of interest on money lent on bottomry (VIII. 157),<sup>1</sup> apparently with no stigma attaching to them. In the Rāmāyaṇa a boat in mid-sea loaded with heavy cargo is an apt metaphor (IV. 16. 24 ; V. 25. 14). Sugrīva gives instructions to his emissaries, sent in search of Sītā to include islands, mountains and sea-ports in the quest (samudram-avagādhānśca parvatān pattanāni ca, IV. . 40. 25). In a verse of the Dīgha, merchants are known to "have crossed the ocean drear, making a solid path across the pools" (ye taranti aṇṇavam saram setum katvāna vasijja pallalāṃ, XVI. i. 34). In the Anguttara voyages (lasting for six months are well-known facts presumably with haltings). These were made in ships which could be drawn up on shore in winter (An. IV. 127). The Jātaka verse is sufficiently familiar with "a ship full-rigged for distant seas" to use it as a metaphor (III. 478).

### Ship-building

To meet the demands of sailors, ship-building had to be cultivated as a separate industry. Qualities of wood were

<sup>1</sup> Nārāyaṇa and Nandana give a different rendering of the verse.

investigated, technicalities of construction were perfected and the art was studied as a separate branch of science. The Yuktikalpataru, a Sanskrit work on certain industrial products of India, makes an elaborate classification of ships of different sizes and shapes giving technical names to each and their parts, and quotes from a lost earlier work of Bhoja on the various qualities of wood used. Guha's boats, as described in the Rāmāyaṇa, are fitted with massive bells and banners. Also well-piloted and well-knit (yuktavāhāḥ susaṃhataḥ, II. 89, 11) they were fit to meet the billows and the blasts. During Alexander's invasion, the Xathroi ran huge dockyards and supplied to the invader galleys of 30 oars and transport vessels (Arr, Anab. VI. 15). The Mauryas kept the industry a state monopoly and expert builders were maintained as state servants not allowed to take private orders (Str. XV. i. 45).

The vessels were sufficiently big and strong to carry a heavy cargo. Guha's flotilla carried, besides men, chariots, horses, bulls and carts although elephants had to be swam across. The fleet, supplied to Alexander by the ship-builders on the Hydaspes, whose strength is computed differently by the Greek writers between 800 and 2,000, accommodated 8,000 troops, several thousand horses and vast quantities of supplies. The ship which took prince Vijaya to Ceylon had 800 passengers according to the Mahāvamso (Turnour, 51). The fresco representation at Ajantā of his landing shows horses and elephants, carried in these boats. In the Jātakas the tonnage is given at 500 (II. 128) with 1,000 (IV. 159) passengers or 7 caravans with beasts, (VI. 30 ff). In the Sāmkha Jātaka a rescue vessel at sea mea-

asures 8 *usabha*×4 *usabha*×20 *yatthika*.<sup>1</sup> According to Pliny the tonnage is much less i.e. 3,000 *amphorae* (cub. ft. of water) or 75 tons.

### *Freight*

There were big ship-owners who kept their vessels at ports and took merchants with their wares to their destination charging a freight for the transit (*yathā.....sadhano nāviko paṭṭane sutṭhu katasumko mahāsamuddaṃ pavisittā*, Mil. 359). *Manu* fixes the freight charges along rivers but says that there is no settled rate for the seas (VIII. 406), showing that here also free bargain reigned supreme and that regulation was futile. Sometimes there were joint owners resembling a shipping agency, and *Manu* lays down a law that they are collectively responsible for the damage caused by their fault to passengers' goods (VIII. 508 f.). In the *Arthaśāstra* as well, which provides for the hiring out of state vessels by merchants and fishers of pearls and conch-shells, there is a similar law that hire charges are to be remitted and losses made good if the ship foundered for any defect (II. 28).<sup>2</sup> According to Megasthenes the Maurya admiralty let out its ships on hire to professional merchants (Str XV. i. 46) bringing a lucrative income to the treasury above the regular port dues and customs duties.

### *Crews and pilots*

There were expert professional pilots who lent themselves for hire to shippers or to merchants.

1 Nothing is known of these linear measures.

2 It is wrong to call it a law of marine insurance since reparation does not cover damage due to accident.

In the great seaport towns were organised guilds or crews under a skipper (*niyyāmakajettṭhaka*) who took charge of vessels at the requisition of sea-going traders and plied their calling from father to son (*Jāt.* IV. 137).

*The compass and the crow*

It is not known whether the ancient pilots were acquainted with the mariner's compass. It has been supposed that the Pali word '*macchayantra*' means that instrument and that the round device at the prow of a ship in a Borobudur sculpture is to be identified with it. For ascertaining directions the mariners observed the stars at night.

They took direction-giving crows (*disākāka*) on board, and like the ancient Phœnicians and Babylonians, let them off when they lost sight of land. The coast was found in the direction taken by the bird (*Jāt.* III. 267). That this practice was devised from very early times is apparent from the verse of the *Rg-veda*, I-25·7—"He (*Varuṇa*) knows the path of birds that fly through heaven, and sovran of the sea,

He knows the ships that are thereon."<sup>1</sup>

This is referred to as a very ancient practice in a well-drawn parable :

"Long long ago, sea-faring traders were wont when they were setting sail on an ocean voyage, to take with them a land-sighting bird. And when the ship got out of sight of the shore they would let the land-sighting bird free (*tiradassiṃ sakenaṃ*). Such a bird would fly to the East, and to the South and to the West and to the North,

1 Griffith: *The Hymns of the Rigveda*

to the Zenith and to the intermediate points of the compass (anudisam). And if anywhere on the horizon it caught sight of land, thither would it fly. But if no land, all round about, were visible, it would come back even to the ship." (Dn. XI. 85 ; An. III. 367).

Plinty testifies to the prevalence of the custom in the South. "In making sea-voyages the Taprobane mariners make no observation of the stars and indeed the Greater Bear is not visible to them, but they take birds out to sea with them which they let loose from time to time and follow the direction of their flight as they make for land." (VI. 22)

### *The paṭṭanas*

Ships set sail from the *paṭṭana* or *paṭṭanagāma*, generally a sea-port but sometimes also a river port having direct access to sea. The Malabar and the Koromandel coasts were dotted with such sea-ports catalogued with their busy traffic in the Periplus (51ff). In the North, the most flourishing sea-port was Bhārukaccha "in the kingdom of Bhāru" (Jāt. IV. 137) on the estuary of the Narmadā. A little south of it was Sūrpāraka "formed by the ocean in the south" at Kaśyapa's command to accommodate Paraśurāma after he had exterminated the Kṣatriyas (Mbh. XII. 49. 67). A third north-western sea-port figures prominently in the Periplus, named Barbaricum at the mouth of the Indus. More ancient than these was Roruka, later known as Roruva, the capital of Sovīra (Jāt. III. 470 ; Dn. II. 235 ; Div. p. 544). Its exact location is not known but it must have been somewhere on the Gulf of Cutch.<sup>1</sup> The Jātakas mention another

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<sup>1</sup> Cunningham, however, identifies this with Alor in Sind.

western port named Karambiya (V. 75) about which no further information is available. What Bhārukaccha was in the West, Tāmralipti was in the East. It commanded the mouth of the Ganges and from there the eastern seaborne trade of the rich *janapadas* in the valleys of the Ganges and the Jumna. There must have been other prosperous sea-ports on the delta of the Ganges and the Mahanadi serving as the outlets for the specialised industries of Bengal and Orissa. But the oversea trade beyond Tāmralipti both to the East and to the South is a sealed book to us.

*Indian states in a world family*

About the beginning of the Christian era Indian shipping was sufficiently expanded to reach all the known ranges of the commercial world. The Periplus is an eloquent testimony to the far-reaching western trade.<sup>1</sup> China and its silk begins to be prominent in Indian literature from this time, and the Milindapañho, a contemporary work, avers that the ship-owner getting rich with freights paid in a sea-port, embarks in the high seas and sails to Bengal, Malay, China, Gujarat, Kathiawad, Alexandria, Koromandel coast and the East Indies or to any other place where the ships congregate.

‘sadhano nāviko paṭṭane suṭṭhu katasuṃko mahā-samuddaṃ pavisitvā Vaṅgaṃ Takkolaṃ Cīnaṃ Sovīraṃ Suratṭhaṃ Alasandaṃ Kolapaṭṭanaṃ Suvannabhūmiṃ gacchati aññaṃ pi yaṃ kiñci nāvāsañcaraṇaṃ’—359.

1 “.....in the age of the Periplus, the merchants of the country round Barygaza traded to Arabia for gums and incense, to the coast of Africa for gold, and to Malabar and Ceylon for pepper and cinnamon and thus completed the navigation of the entire Indian ocean.” Vincent: *Commerce of the Ancients*, Vol. II, p. 404.

*Mesopotamia*

The earliest trade communication of Western India in ancient times was with Mesopotamia. Kennedy makes out a case for Babylonian commerce with Bhārukaccha and Sūrpāraka at the latest before the 7th century B. C.<sup>1</sup> Connecting the sea-voyage references in the R̥g-veda with the appearance of the word *sindhu* for muslin in a Babylonian list of clothes, Sayce regards this as an evidence of trade with the Indus valley as early as 3,000 B. C.<sup>2</sup> Later on, this trade diverted mainly to the Dravidians since the Indian names naturalised in the west were Tamil—neither Sanskrit nor Pali. The Mesopotamian trade is directly referred to in a Jātaka story where traders from India dispose of crow and other wares after strenuous higgling (III. 126 f.). Elsewhere the name of Baveru or Babylon is conventionally tagged on to tales of shipwreck without any particulars. Evidently the sea-route to the Euphrates was still too strenuous to afford regular communication.

*Euphrates route : Iran*

Indo-Mesopotamian commerce had three routes,—a sea-route along the coasts of Sind, Gedrosia and Iran, another a mixed water and land-route from Gandhāra and Bactria along the Oxus and across the Caspian and the Black seas, and a third overland route from Sind through Iran. Iran was thus the highway of Indo-Babylonian trade—the sea-route passing through its territorial waters, the land-route through its soil. It figures in India's commercial horizon

1 Early Commerce between India and Babylon, J. R. A. S., 1898.

2 Hibbert Lectures.

from much earlier times than the 7th century B. C. A route across the high seas between India and its coasts is supposed to have existed in the days of Buddha from the Chinese legend embodied in the *Dīpavaṃsa* relating the founding of a colony from Ceylon on the Persian Gulf. Through the eastern campaigns of Cyrus (558-30 B. C.) the Medo-Persian kingdom was brought into more or less direct contact with India. Probably the Indus valley had a favourable balance of trade in the 5th century B. C. with Persia and other countries so as to enable it to pay Darius every year 360 Euboic talents of gold dust working out to 9 tons and 5 cwts.

#### *Imports & exports*

In the days of the *Periplus* coastal voyage from Broach to the Euphrates was a regular affair of merchants. To the ports of the Persian Gulf, *viz.*, Apologus and Ommana "large vessels are regularly sent from Barygaza loaded with copper and sandalwood and timbers of teakwood and logs of blackwood and ebony." From these ports "there are exported to Barygaza and also to Arabia, many pearls, but inferior to those of India;"<sup>1</sup> purple,<sup>2</sup> clothing after the fashion of the place, wine,<sup>3</sup> a great quantity of dates, gold and slaves." The trade

1 "This is said still to be the case, the Bahrein pearls being of a yellower tint than those of the Manaar fisheries, but holding their lustre better, particularly in tropical climates, and therefore always in demand in India." Schoff.

2 A dye extracted from various species of fishes. Schoff.

3 Date wine and grape wine. Schoff.

which at present centres at Bahrein has almost the same list of imports and exports.

*Nile route : Arabia*

As the approach to the Euphrates lay through Persian waters, so the way to the Nile and the Mediterranean led through the Arabian. Agatharcides (177 B. C.) quoted by Greek writers describes Sabaea (Yemen) as holding the monopoly of the Indian trade. From the great marts of Muza (Mokha), Cana (Bir Ali) and Moscha (2 mi. east of Taka) on the southern coast, Arab ship-owners and sea-farers traded with the Somali coast and with Barygaza, "sending their own ships there" in competition with the Egyptian Greeks (Peri. 21, 27). They brought from Damirica and Barygaza cloth, wheat and sesame oil, and if the season was late they wintered at the harbour of Moscha exchanging those Indian goods for frankincense "which lies in heaps all over the Sakhalitic country" (32).

*Socotra*

An important halting place between India and Arabia was Dioscorida or Socotra, the island of all races and the centre of international trade not far from the time of Abraham. Edyptians, Arabians, Africans and Indians from the gulfs of Cutch and Cambay met here to exchange their cargo and settle colonies so that at the time of the Periplus the inhabitants were a "mixture of Arabs and Indians and Greeks." The voyagers from Damirica and Barygaza "bring in rice and wheat and Indian cloth, and a few female slaves; and they take

for their exchange cargoes a great quantity of tortoise-shell" (30, 31).<sup>1</sup>

### *Berbera*

Beyond Socotra and Arabia, the Mediterranean route passed along the Somali and Berber coasts. In the *Periplus Malao* (the Berber country) is described as a great intermediary mart between India and Egypt. ".....From the district of Ariaca across the sea, there are imported Indian iron and steel, and Indian cotton cloth; the broad cloth called *monakhē* and that called *sagmatogénē*, and girdles, and coats of skin and mallowcoloured cloth; and a few muslins and coloured lac" (6). Other imports were Indian copal<sup>2</sup> and macir<sup>3</sup> (8). "And ships are also customarily fitted out from the places across this sea, from Ariaca and Barygaza, bringing to these far-side market-towns the products of their own places; wheat, rice, clarified butter, sesame oil, cotton cloth and girdles, and honey from the reed called *sakkhari*. Some make the voyage especially to these market towns, and others exchange their cargoes while sailing along the coast." (14).

### *Arab monopoly at Red Sea*

"The important thing to be noted here is that these agricultural products were regularly shipped, in Indian vessels, from the Gulf of Cambay; that these vessels exchanged

1 *Dioscorida* is a corruption from the Sanskrit 'Dwīpa Sukhādhāra' — 'the island abode of bliss.' For further associations of the island with India and survivals of Indian influences see Schoff, pp. 133 ff.

2. *Kankamon*. Pliny says it is a dye, *Dioscorides* an exudation used as incense.

3 An aromatic and medicinal bark.

their cargoes at Cape Guardafui and proceeded along the coast, some southward, but most westward; and that according to 25, Ocelis, at the entrance to the Red Sea was their terminus, the Arabs forbidding them to trade beyond. Between India and Cape Guardafui they apparently enjoyed the bulk of the trade, shared to some extent by Arabian shipping and quite recently by Greek ships from Egypt; on the Somali coast they shared the trade in an incidental way; and they received their return cargoes at Ocelis and shared none of the Red Sea trade, which in former times the Arabs of Yemen had monopolised, but in the days of the Ptolemies the Egyptians had largely taken over."<sup>1</sup>

### *Egypt*

After Zanzibar the next objective was Egypt. Strabo quotes the story of Posidonios how a certain Indian alone in a ship, picked up by the coast guard of the Arabian Gulf, related that he had started from the coast of India but lost his course and reached Egypt alone, all the companions having perished with hunger. Thereafter he headed a trading mission sent by the Egyptian prince Euergetes II to India "with a good supply of presents, and brought back with him in exchange aromatics and precious stones, some of which the Indians collect from amongst the pebbles of the river, others they dig out of the earth, where they have been formed by the moisture, as crystals are formed with us." On the return journey of a second voyage he was again carried away by the winds above Ethiopia and thrown in unknown regions (II. iii. 4).

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<sup>1</sup> Schoff.

As known from a Papyrus of the 2nd Century A.D., discovered in Egypt, a Greek farce centring around a Greek lady stranded on the coast of a country bordering Indian Ocean—contains several passages in Kanarese language. The writer must have owed these either to a Kanarese living in Egypt or to a Greek who had learnt this language in India. Either of these would suggest active intercourse between Egypt and South of India. In an inscription (hitherto misread) on a temple on the route from Berenice on Red Sea to the Nile, Prof Wilcken found the name of an Indian traveller who halted there to worship at the shrine of the Greek god Pan during the period of the Ptolemies. Roman Emperors received embassies from Indian Courts and Priaulx courts such before 200 A.D (Hultzsch, JRAS, 1904. P. 399 ff.). So between the Roman empire and India, it was not entirely a one way traffic.

#### *Development of Indo-Egyptian trade*

It appears that 'a voyage between India and Egypt was a risky affair and very rarely undertaken. In Strabo's day Rome had explored the world of Arabian and Indian commerce. "The entrance of a Roman army into Arabia Felix under the command of my friend and companion Aelius Gallus and the traffic of the Alexandrian merchants whose vessels pass up the Nile and the Arabian Gulf to India have rendered us much better acquainted with these countries than our predecessors were.....I found that about 120 ships sail from Myos Hormos to India, although in the time of the Ptolemies scarcely any one would venture on this voyage and the commerce with the Indies" (II. v. 12). The route of the Alexandrian commerce in his day is also given. "It (merchandise) is brought

down from Arabia and India to Myos Hormos, it is then conveyed on camels to Coptus of the Thebais, situated on a canal of the Nile and to Alexandria" (XVI. iv. 24).

### *Indo-Egyptian routes*

Combining the testimony of Strabo and the Periplus the Indo-Egyptian route appears to be from Alexandria along the Nile up to Coptus, thence by camel to Myos Hormos, the cluster of islands now Jifātin. From Myos Hormos or Berenice the ships sailed down the Red Sea to Mouza and thence to the watering place of Okelis at the Straits. They made a coastal voyage as far as Cana leaving behind Eudaimon or Aden. From Cana some ships sailed to Barbaricum or to Barygaza, sometimes halting at the island of Dioscorida or Socotra, others sailed direct for the ports of Limyrike (Malabar Coast). From Aromata or Cape Guardafui another route led straight to Malabar. Pliny describes how the Indian route was shortened by successive discoveries through the love of gain, so that "at the present day voyages are made to India every year" (VI. 23). The last and the most important of the series was the discovery of the monsoon ascribed to Hippalus (Peri. 57).

### *Arab-Roman rivalry*

But he did a still greater thing, viz., freeing the Roman Empire from Arabian monopoly of the Eastern trade by tracing it to its source. The commercial bond between India and Arabia which had lasted at least for 2,000 years and probably much longer was beginning to break under the impact of Rome, with the conquest of Egypt and the establishment of the Axumite King-

dom, the Ptolemies systematically pursued the policy of cultivating direct communication with India and freeing Egypt from commercial dependence on Yemen. There are significant facts bearing testimony to this change. The survival of Arabian control is noticed in the Roman knowledge of cinnamon bark as a product of Somaliland, an Arabian tributary. But cinnamon leaf which was brought later into commerce was known (malabathrum, 56, 65) as an Indian and Tibetan product. The 'small vessels' from Mouza to the Nabataean port (19) may be contrasted with the large vessels (10) that traded from Mosyllium to Egypt. Yemen was still wooed with gifts and embassies by Rome (23) but the policy of appeasement was soon abandoned. "It was no part of the Arab policy, whether Homerite, Minaean or Nabataean to let Rome cultivate direct relations with India, and as the Empire expanded stronger measures were necessary. Fifty years later than the Periplus, Trajan had captured Petra, and Abyssinia was being subsidised to attack Yemen."<sup>1</sup>

#### *Roman trade : Exports to Rome*

Pliny in whose time Indian Trade was at its highest mentions several Indian imports very often stated with the price at which they were sold at Rome. These may be collected in the following list.

<sup>1</sup> Schoff.

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Exports to Rome	Value	Reference
<i>Silk</i> —Chinese and Indian. It became a craze with society girls and was too fine to keep their modesty	Worth weight in gold	XI. 26; XXI. 8
<i>Pepper</i> — ... ..	6 dinarii per lb.	„
<i>Long pepper</i> (adulterated with mustard)	15 „	„
<i>White pepper</i> ... ..	7 „	„
“Both pepper and ginger grow wild in their respective countries and here we buy them by weight like gold and silver	... ..	XII. 8
<i>Lyctum</i> ... ..	... ..	„
<i>Macir</i> ... ..	... ..	„
<i>Sugar</i> —more esteemed than the Arabian product ... ..	... ..	„
<i>Ebony</i> —two varieties, one ordinary, one precious. Imported after the Asiatic conquests of Pompey the Great. Egypt was a competitor	... ..	XII. 8, 9; cf. Virgil : Georgics, II. 116f.
<i>Bdellium</i> —Arabia, Media and Babylon were competitors ... ..	3 dinarii per lb.	XII. 9
<i>Costus</i> ... ..	5 „	XII. 12
<i>Nard</i> ... ..	100 „	„
<i>Amomum grape</i> ... ..	60 „	„
<i>Crumbled grape</i> ... ..	49 „	„
<i>Cardamum</i> —a medical harb ... ..	3 „	„
<i>Scented Calamus</i> —not properly ide-ntified by naturalists. Arabia and Syria were competitors ... ..	... ..	XII. 22
<i>Indigo</i> —a recent import ... ..	17 „	XXXIII. 4; XXXV. 6

Exports to Rome	Value	Reference
<i>Crystals</i> —the Indian kind is ... best in the East ...	...	XXXVII. 10
<i>Amber, diamond, beryl</i> —highly prized among Indians ...	...	"
<i>Opal</i> —India had a monopoly ...	...	"
<i>Sardonyx, onyx of inferior varieties</i> ...	...	"
<i>Carbuncle</i> —Carthage was a competitor ...	...	"
<i>Sandastros</i> —Arabia was a competitor ...	...	"
<i>Callaina, jasper, amethyst, pæderos, obsidian, zoronisceos</i> ...	...	"

"Thus completing her glory as being the great producer of the most costly gems" (XXXVII. 10) and being "of all countries the most prolific of them" (XXXVII. 13).

The list is not exhaustive. In the *Periplus* the exports from Barbaricum, most of which found their way to Rome, are costus, bdellium, lycium, nard, turquoise, lapis lazuli, seric skins, cotton cloth, silk yarn and indigo (39.) From Barygaza were sent across spikenard from the Ganges, costus, bdellium, ivory, agate and carnelian, pebbles, lycium, cotton cloth of all kinds—the *monakhe* and the *sagmatogene*, silk cloth, mallow cloth—a coarse fabric, yarn, long pepper "and such other things as are brought here from the various market towns" (49). Besides this there was the rich export trade of the Tamil ports (51 ff).

### Imports

Among the imports of Barbaricum were "a great deal of thin clothing, and a little spurious," figured linens (*polymita*)

of Egypt and Babylon, topaz of the Red Sea island from Egypt, the red coral of the western Mediterranean—one of the principal assets of the Roman Empire in its eastern trade, storax, frankincense from Arabia, vessels of glass, silver and gold plate and a little wine. Into Barygaza were brought wine, Italian preferred, also Laodicean and Arabian; copper, tin and lead—largely for Saka coinage; coral and topaz; thin clothing and inferior sorts of all kinds; bright-coloured girdles a cubit wide<sup>1</sup>; storax; sweet clover—used for making chaplets, perfumes and medicine; flint glass; realgar (sandarake)<sup>2</sup>; antimony; gold and silver coin, “on which there is a profit when exchanged for the money of the country”<sup>3</sup>; and ointment, but not very costly and not much. And for the king there were brought into those places very costly vessels of silver, singing boys, beautiful maidens for the harem, fine wines, thin clothing of the finest weaves and the choicest ointments.

#### *Balance of Indo-Roman trade*

Thus Indian imports consisted chiefly of tin, lead, glass, amber, steel, coral, coarse clothing, topaz and storax and frankincense from Arabia while her exports were iron, skins, wheat, rice, butter, oil, sugar, silk and muslin, wool and furs, wood, tortoise

- 1 Probably for the Bhils who worked the carnelian mines then as now. Schoff.
- 2 Red sulphide of arsenic, used for medicine.
- 3 “The profit on the exchange was due to the superiority of the Roman coinage to that of India, which latter was still crude, of base metal (bronze or lead), for which even the bullion (copper, tin and lead) was imported.” Schoff.

shell, pearls, large variety of drugs, dyes, aromatics, edible spices and precious stones. The balance of trade was completely in India's favour. In vain Pliny raised his voice against the heavy exploitation of his country's wealth: "At the very lowest computation, India, the Seres and the Arabian peninsula drained from our empire yearly 100 million sesterces,<sup>1</sup> so dearly we pay for our luxury and our women" (XII. 18).

### *The trade curve*

To attempt a brief *resume* of the history of the Indo-Roman trade. Prior to Emperor Augustus the western trade was carried on mainly by way of Egypt through the ports of Berenica and Myos Hormos to Alexandria. The bulk of this trade took the sea-route. The trade was at its highest between Augustus and Nero in the first century A.D.—stimulated by the discovery of the monsoons. Spices and perfumes, pearls and precious stones, silks and muslins were the favourite Indian wares in Roman market. Among the chief exports were spices and precious stones, as appears not only from Pliny but also from the discovery of Roman coins from the sources of supply of these commodities.<sup>1</sup> Between Nero and Caracalla (217 A.D.) there was a lapse. Instead of luxuries there was a limited trade in necessities such as cotton fabrics and the trade was mainly with the north where Roman coins of this period have been found.<sup>2</sup> This decline coincides with a reaction in Rome to plebian habits

<sup>1</sup> Equivalent to £ 70,000.

<sup>2</sup> See Sewell: *Roman Coins Found in India*, J.R.A.S. 1904 pp. 591 ff.

against the luxury and dissipation of the higher classes,—the case for which Pliny advocated so strongly.

*Southern trade : Ceylon and Tamil countries*

The picture of the southern and eastern trade does not appear with so much glamour and detail. The Tamil countries and Ceylon<sup>1</sup> were the objectives of the southern trade, carried from Bhārukaccha and Sūrpāraka in the west and from Tāmralipti and other ports of Bengal and Kalinga in the east. The exploration of the island of Ceylon and its conquest is ascribed to prince Vijaya from Bengal on the very day when Buddha attained *nirvāṇa*.<sup>2</sup> In the Jātakas Ceylon is known as the *nāga* island, i.e., the island inhabited by people called *naga* or dragons. It lay on the route from Bhārukaccha to the East Indies. (III. 188). Mariners from Benares, plying down the Ganges, sail and touch at this island (*ibid*). The Indian *purāṇa* and *kāhāpaṇa* made way into Ceylon and became current in the island.<sup>3</sup> The Tamil countries were reached both by land and by sea. On the way from the northwest coast to the East Indies was Manimekhalā,<sup>4</sup> the divine name of Tamil, famous in the north for its efficient shipping. In stories of shipwreck of northern voyagers, the divinity comes to rescue with magic ships of titanic size (8 *usabhax* 4 *usabhax* 20 *yaṭṭhika*) with three masts

1 Regarding India's trade with Ceylon, see Jātaka II. 196 ; Mahāvamśa XXI. 10 ; S. K. Maity, The Economic Life of Northern India in the Gupta period, pp. 130-132.

2 The story of the Ceylonese Chronicles is half mythic and half historical and the date is absolutely unreliable. All that we may conjecture is that it is a pre-Maurya episode.

3 Codrington, Ceylon Coins and Currency, p. 16.

4 See Krishnaswami Aiyangar : *Manimekhala in its Historical Setting*.

and bedecked all over with sapphire, gold and silver (IV. 15ff. VI. 35). The tradition at least shows that the southerners were more expert sea-farers and their ships were more seaworthy and of larger size. The Periplus also testifies that the Colas and the Pāṇdyas sent their wares to the Ganges in large ships called Colandia. Their ports were visited in turn by ships "from the north"—evidently from the Ganges and Bengal. From Tamil literary evidence (Paddinappalai, 1—0) it appears that from the North were exported to the Cola market of Kāveripaddinam, horses,—sent from Sind and the Punjab, gold and precious stones from the northern mountains, and coral from the eastern seas.

### *Burma and Indonesia*

The main outlet of northern merchandise for the South and the East was Tāmralipti (Tamluk). Some of its wares were even shipped to the West. "Through this place are brought malabathrum (from the eastern Himalayas), Gangetic spikenard (the true spikenard from the Himalayas) and pearls, and muslins of the finest sorts, which are called Gangetic" (Peri. 63). It was the nearest seaport for approaching Pegu, Malay, Sumatra, Java, Cambodia and even China and Japan by sea. In the Jātakas, Suvāṇṇabhūmi—a generic name for the East Indian islands, is the regular field of mercantile adventure. Unlike the traders of the Gulf of Cambay who dealt with the Western world, the mariners of Andhra, Kalinga and Bengal did not rest with sending their cargo to the markets of Indonesia. They made bold to embark across the seas and colonise *en masse*. Traces of their adventure survive in the remnants of Indian civilisation widely scattered over Burma, Malaya, Sumatra, Java and Cambodia—

the farthest outpost of ancient Indian culture. The history of these momentous maritime exploits—full of life and vigour, and backed by strong socio-economic forces let loose in the mother-country, is entirely a lost story—lost like the great sand-buried cities of Khotan.

### *History of foreign trade : The Mauryas*

In the third century before Christ, the Maurya Empire takes its place in an international family with Syria, Egypt, Cyrene, Macedonia and Epirus, cultivating diplomatic relations and sending missionaries to preach the gospel of Dhamma (R. Es. II, XIII). Centuries of international trade had built up the highway for this political and religious intercourse. The influx of foreigners in the metropolis was so great at the time of Megasthenes that the municipal board had to set apart a committee to take care of them. The generals in the company of the Macedonian conqueror were struck by the din of the great dockyards of the Punjab tribes. The Mauryas were astute enough to monopolise this industry and maintain a strong admiralty, employing its fleet both for naval and commercial purposes.

### *The Sātavāhanas*

The Sātavāhanas, who were in possession of the western ports of Bhārukaccha and Sorpāraga, and who equipped them with quadrangular rest houses (*catuśālāvasadhapratiśraya-pradana*, Nasik C. I, E.I., VIII, must have pursued a vigorous commercial policy. The Kanheri Caves executed in their time contain sculptural representations of voyages through sea. They maintained a regular service of pilotage in the

rough waters of Cambay (Peri. 44-46). The Periplus gives a passing glimpse of the great part this commercial interest played in the affairs of state. Sandanes,<sup>1</sup> who ruled over the prosperous trading communities of the western sea-board, took possession of Kalliena (Kalyāṇa), formerly belonging to the House of Saraganus the Elder (Śātakarṇi), subjected its trade to the severest restrictions, so that if Greek vessels entered its port even accidentally, they were seized and sent under escort to Barygaza—evidently the seat of paramount power (52). Presumably it was an attempt to divert the overseas trade of Kalyāṇa and centralise it at Bhārūkaccha.

#### *The Andhras, Kalingas and Vaṅgas*

The Andhras were veteran sea-farers pursuing their trade from the eastern coast. Even their coins belonging to the second and the third centuries A.D. bear the device of ships "full-rigged for distant seas." The Colas, the Kalingas and the people of Vaṅga, Puṇḍra and Samatāṭa were their rivals in eastern trade. The kings of Vaṅga had powerful naval forces and are said in Kālidāsa's Raghuvamśa to be trusting in their ships.

#### *The Kuṣāṇas*

Under Kaniṣka, when the Kuṣāṇa and the Roman empires marched almost contiguous, Roman trade was at its highest. References to Romaka in the Mahābhārata and in the astronomical *siddhāntas* originate from this period. Rome was alive to the importance of Yueh-Chi alliance against the Parthians and Sassanians and as controller of the great overland trade-route through Afghanistan between the East and

1 *Sādhana*—says Lassen.

the West. "How close was the friendship is shown in A. D. 60 by the Roman general Corbulo escorting the Hyrcanian ambassadors up the Indus and through the territories of the Kushans or Indo-Scythians on their return from their embassy to Rome."<sup>1</sup>

*Perils of the sea*

Yet the sea was full of danger (*samuddo anekādīnavo*) and it was love of gain that inspired man to defy them. In a mother's estimation as regards her son intent on a voyage, these risks far outweighed the expected returns (*Jāt. IV. 2*). Shipwreck is a common catastrophe in the *Jātakas* (*II. 103* ; *III. 26* ; *V. 75*). The vagaries of the weather and of the waves were not sufficiently explored. Shipwreck is often due to planks giving way (*Jāt. VI. 34* ; *bhinna-naukānivārṇave*, *Mbh. VIII. 2. 20*], caused by cataracts or tidal bores or by running a hidden rock or coming in the field of a magnetic rock,<sup>2</sup> as for example the *Maināk* which earned a notoriety in the *Epics* for its heavy toll of merchant men. When dangers go out of control, men fall into myths. Accordingly the sea, due to insufficient acquaintance, became associated with mythical horrors and for their counterpart, with mythical charms. It is infested with goblins and monsters and *nāgas* devouring shipwrecked persons and it abounds with gold, diamond and nectar, the very elixir of life (*Jāt. II. 127 ff.* ; *III. 345* ; *IV. 139 ff.* ; *Mbh. I. 20-22*).

1 R. K. Mukherji, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

2 This possibly is the reason why cane-fibres instead of iron strips were used to join the planks : *An. IV, 127*. Hare renders 'vettabandhanabaddhāya' as 'rigged with masts and stays.' The explanation of Buddhagosa does not allow this rendering.

*The Gulfs of Cutch and Cambay*

Even in the days of the Arthaśāstra ocean traffic was far more dangerous than land traffic (II. 16 and Com.). And these dangers were not all imaginary. The Periplus gives a realistic insight into them. The gulfs of Cutch and Cambay were great danger-zones. "Those who are drawn inside into the Gulf of Baraka (Dwārakā) are lost ; for the waves are high and very violent, and the sea is tumultuous and foul, and has eddies and rushing whirlpools. The bottom is in some places abrupt, and in others rocky and sharp, so that the anchors lying there are parted, some being quickly cut off, and others chafing on the bottom."(40)

A glimmering glimpse is obtained why the ancient seaport of Rorua goes out of the picture and Barbaricum, farther west and north, comes as a parvenu.

Due to the extreme intensity of ebb and flow in the Narmadā, entrance and exit of vessels in Bhārūkaccha were very dangerous to the inexperienced. The Periplus vividly describes the vagaries of the tidal bore (45 f.). Because of the navigating in the Gulf of Cambay and the mouth of Narmadā, the state maintained a regular service of pilotage, under which incoming vessels were met at least 100 miles down from the port. "Native fishermen in the king's service, stationed at the very entrance in well-manned large boats ... go up the coast as far as Syrastrēne, from which they pilot vessels to Barygaza. And they steer them straight from the mouth of the Bay between the shoals with their crews ; and they tow them to fixed stations, going up with the beginning of flood, and lying through the ebb at anchorages and in basins. These basins are deeper places as far as Barygaza, which lies by the river about 300 stadia up from the mouth."(44)

The coastal route of Arabia was discarded as unsafe.<sup>(20)</sup> The story of Posidonios repeated by Strabo is another concrete instance of the perilous nature of a long sea voyage.

### *Piracy*

Not all the perils came from nature. The arch-peril of maritime commerce was piracy. The myths of man-eating sea-monsters in the Jātakas may be traced to this source. For the name of *nāga* applies to both a pirate and a monster. According to the Kashmirian poet Kṣemendra, these *nāga* pirates were active in the Eastern waters in the days of Aśoka. Traders waited upon the Emperor and complained that all their ships and treasures were plundered by these people and that if the conditions ran as they were, they would change their pursuits resulting in fall of revenue (Bodh. Kalp., Pall. 73).

### *Konkan coast*

The worst piratical rendezvous in the Indian ocean was the Konkan coast, entrenched in its numerous creeks and bays which afforded safe harbourage to their cruisers. They fed upon the richly freighted merchantmen that frequented this place. According to Ptolemy the Pirate Coast extended from the neighbourhood of Simylla (Chaul, 23 mi. S. of Bombay) to Nitra (Mangalore) (1.7). The Periplus (53) and Pliny refer to the pirates who infested this place and the latter adds that merchant vessels from Egyptian ports carried as a precaution companies of archers on board. In Ptolemy's time these pirates felt the strong hand of the state. The father of the Red Cherā destroyed "Kadambu of the sea-coast" and thus the coast was freed from their depredations between 80 and 222 A.D. But Arab-Berber predators

still dominated African and Arabian coasts, "men of piratical habits, very great in stature and under separate chiefs for each place" (Peri. 16, 20). Such was the nuisance and havoc they created, that the author of the *Arthaśāstra* has to enjoin that pirate ships (*himsrikā*) are to be destroyed at sight (II. 28).

*The urge for gain*

So the vision dawns before our eyes of ancient Indian mariners even from the Vedic times braving unknown perils across fathomless depths and under limitless skies. The Indian teak excavated at Ur in Sumer, the Indian frescoes worked at Borobudur in Java, the Indian inscription at the Horiuzi temple in Japan give an inkling of the magnitude and duration of their exploits.<sup>1</sup> As the roads between Puṣkalāvati and Tāmrāipti hummed with cracking wheels, the roaring waves of the Indian ocean were broken by the rhythmic splashes of oars, the very emblems of patient and persevering search for gain gingered up by an unconquerable spirit of adventure. We feel our sojourn in a world of reality, a material world of the stock and the bourse where *artha* fulfils its destiny in human life—where empires come to measure arms to secure commercial advantage, where overseas trade paves the path for conquests of Dhamma and conquests of arms, where the merchant, the missionary and the military march one after another in an automatic cycle,—all originating from the much derided mercantile gospel 'yathārthaṃ labhate dhanam'—'profit according to investment.'

Compare the present deterioration in Indian shipping. The share of Indian companies is 13 p.c. of coastal traffic and 2 p.c. ocean-borne trade of India while formerly, both were entirely Indian.

## CHAPTER VI

### STATE LEVIES AND STATE CONTROL ON COMMERCE

*Intervention of State. Taxation of commerce.*

*Practice :* the *śulka* ; protection, moderation ; reduction and remission ; assignment of toll receipts, subsidy and loan. Realisation of toll, suppression of smuggling. State monopolies. Control by the Sakas, protection: Control by the Mauryas, rigorous and drastic.

*Theory :* principles of assessment. The *sannidhātṛ*. Encouragement of import. The charges. The *śulka* or toll rates. The *dvāradeya* or gate due. The *varṭanī* or road cess. Realisation of dues and suppression of smuggling. The *pranaya* or benevolence. The *rājakāriya* or forced labour. Port dues. Monopolies. Price-fixing. Control of buying and selling. From free to regulated economy.

#### *Intervention of State*

As trade and commerce expanded and became the strongest economic factor in urban life it called forth in an increasing measure the intervention of the state. Its first concern was of course to derive a revenue from the new income ; next, to monopolise those trades and industries which yielded best profits or which affected vital interests of state. The exercise of these very rights drew it into further and further interference. The evils of competition, unfair dealings, deception of customers, smuggling and deleterious machinations of big business all combined to intensify the anarchy in the commercial world. The state was faced with the growing problems of restoring order. For on the stability of the market depended the stability of its finance.

*Revenue from the new income*

Assessment of commercial wealth was run on the same line as assessment of agricultural produce. It was the same principles of taxation applied to the different *vārttās*. The same social contract of protection and payment between the sovereign and the subjects is the theoretical basis of both the systems. The same moderation in assessment and realisation of revenue is the prescribed canon in both. The state had its own commercial concerns as it had its agricultural land and cattle. Toll dues were occasionally remitted and sometimes transferred as in the case of land revenue. Lastly, the doctrine of emergency was a convenient tool in the hands of the state for the best use and worst abuse.

*The sulka for protection*

As the *bhāga* was the customary revenue on land, the *sulka* was the toll on merchandise levied for the protection it received from the state (Mbh. XII. 71. 10).<sup>1</sup> Among the vauntings of a king how he stands above his kin is "You know Uposatha, merchants coming from many a realm prosper here and I look to their welfare and protection."

atho pi vanijā phitā nānāratṭhāto āgatā  
tase me vibhitā rakkhā evaṃ jānāha Uposathā'ti.  
Jat. IV. 135.

In the Rg-veda *sulka* means price. Muir traces the sense of tax in a passage in the Atharva Veda, III, 29.3. See Macdonell & Keith : *Vedic Index*, Vol. II. p. 387.

In a kingless country, merchants from afar with a varied cargo cannot safely cross the roads.

na-arājake janapade vaṇijo dūragāminah  
gacchanti kṣemamaddhvānaṃ bahupaṇyasamacitāḥ.

Rām. II. 67. 11.

From Nārada's admonition to Yudhiṣṭhira it would seem that the king was not only to treat merchants with consideration in his capital and kingdom but also see that buyers or his officers in the zeal to encourage import did not tempt merchants with high hopes or false prettexts to bring their goods (Mbh. II. 5. 115).

### *Moderation*

Protection and encouragement of commerce meant that taxation did not fall heavy on dealings of exchange. Moderation is the keynote of Indian financial speculation. "Let him not cut up his own root (by levying no taxes) nor the root of other (men) by excessive greed; for by cutting up his own root (or theirs) he makes himself or them wretched" (Manu, VII. 139). "Let him also lay just duties on other marketable goods according to their intrinsic value without oppressing the traders" (anupah-atya, Baudh. I. 10. 18. 15). An admonition in the Jātaka elaborated in the commentary shows how the king's exchequer fails as a result of excessive taxation of citizens engaged in buying and selling transactions (ye yuttā kaya-vikkaye, V. 243). Nārada warns Yudhiṣṭhira that it should be his anxious care to see that only such dues as prescribed in the canon (yathoktam) and no arbitrary imposts are realised from the merchants who come to his territories from distant lands, impelled by the desire of gain (Mbh. II. 5. 114).

*Reduction and remission*

Moderation sometimes urged reduction or complete remission of tolls and duties. The birth of an heir to the throne was a suitable occasion for such a gesture. On the occasion of Mahāvīra's birth prince Siddhārtha released customs, taxes, confiscations and fines (Jaina Kalpasūtra, 102). Rare products useful for the interests of state might be freed from duties to encourage their import. Kosmas writes from the sixth century that the king of Siediba (?) imported his horses from Persia and the traders supplying were exempt from customs dues.

Toll receipts might be transferred like any other revenue. The king might make a bequest of them to whoever might please his fancy (Jāt. VI. 347).<sup>1</sup> Or sometimes the king might choose to pay his officers by the assignment of the receipts as would appear from Nārada's speech (yathoktam avahāryante śulkaṃ śulkopajī-vibhiḥ).

*Subsidy and loan*

An enlightened commercial policy did not stop at moderate assessment and remission. It sometimes encouraged trade and industry by direct subsidy. The state gave not only civil but also economic protection. Pursuant to the financial maxim that mitigation of want will increase revenue, a chaplain advises a king whose realm is harassed and harried by dacoits that taxation or punishment are

1 The Inscription of Dhavala of Hastikunḍi at Bijapur assigns  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the toll proceeds to Jina and  $\frac{1}{2}$  to a temple *guru*. Verse 17.

not the right redress. "Whoever there be in the king's realm who devote themselves to cattle and the farm, to them let his Majesty give food and seed-corn. Whoever there be in the king's realm who devote themselves to trade, to them let his Majesty give capital. Whosoever there be in the king's realm who devote themselves to Government service (*rāja-porise*) to them let his Majesty give wages and food" (Dn. V. II). Peace and order depended on the prosperity and satisfaction of subjects all around and the lesson is constantly harped upon to bring round errant kings. Nārada's admonition to Yudhiṣṭhira suggests the subsidisation of merchants and craftsmen as a healthy state policy (Mbh. II. 5. 71). King Siddhārtha's concessions to his subjects on the occasion of Mahāvīra's birth included cancellation of debts implying the same benevolent practice of advancing loans to agriculture and business.

#### *Realisation of toll dues : smuggling*

A city officer fixes the toll for merchants (*vāṇijānaṃ suṃkāni*, Jāt. IV. 132). As regards the rates no evidence is forthcoming. The tolls were collected on incoming goods at the four gates of the city (*catūsu dvāresu suṃkaṃ*, VI. 347) at the customs house (*suṃkatthāna*, Vin. III. 4; Mil. 359)<sup>1</sup> attached to each gate. Collection was strict and for an attempted evasion the whole wagon was seized by the government. This is elaborated in the commentary on Buddha's parable in the Aṅguttara Nikāya of 'the payer of taxes on merchandise' (*suṃkadāyikam eva*

1 Cf. the *menḍapikā* or customs house in later inscriptions like the Grant of Sivaskandavarman and the Baijnath Parvati.

bhaṇḍasmim, I. 53). "Just as one liable to pay duties on goods he has bought and 'smuggled through the customs' is overwhelmed by his guilty act, and it he who is the guilty one, not the Government, not the Government officials.....He who smuggles goods through the Customs House is seized, cart and all, and shown to Government..."

### *State monopolies*

The most lucrative industries, those which commanded the best market abroad or those which involved the vital interests of the state, were kept under its monopoly. Medhātithi illustrates Manu VIII. 399 by citing saffron in Kashmir; fine cloth and wool in the East; horses in the West; precious stones and pearls in the South; and elephants everywhere. We have already seen that horse and elephants, particularly the latter, were very often royal preserves.<sup>1</sup> As for pearls the Periplus says that the fishery at Colchi was worked by condemned criminals and regarding Argaru "at this place and nowhere else are brought the pearls gathered on the coast thereabouts."<sup>2</sup> In the Sāntiparva (69. 29), the Arthaśāstra (II. 12) and the Karle and Nasik Inscriptions mines and salt centres appear as state monopolies. According to Pliny, from the salt-range of Ormenus between the Indus and the Hydaspes, "a greater revenue accrues to the sovereign of the country than they derive from gold and pearls" (XXXI. 7)<sup>3</sup>. The

1 See Bk. I. Ch. V.

2 Cf. E. I., II. 13—Nagpur Stone Inscription.

3. Reminiscences of such monopolies are observed in the royal monopolies in manufacture or sale of salt, sugar, tobacco, matches, etc., in many of the old Indian Native States.

mines and fisheries were profitably worked by the state by means of free convict labour. Sometimes the state extended its control over the whole foreign trade and strictly regulated the distribution of imports as for example the Scythians of the west in the first century A. D. "The ships lie at anchor at Barbaricum but all their cargoes are carried up to the metropolis by the river to the king" ( Peri. 39 ). Sandares ( ? ) who conquered Kalyāṇa subjected its trade to severe restrictions and diverted the Greek trade to Bhārukaccha. his chief trade mart ( 52 ).

#### *State control under the Śakas*

The Śakas not only controlled the overseas trade but also gave it necessary protection. They made Bhārukaccha a safe harbour against the extreme vagaries of the tidal bore at the estuary of the Narmadā by engaging native fishermen "in well-manned large boats" to steer safely the incoming vessels ( Peri. 44-46 ). The kings had to protect overseas trade against the depredations of pirates, a function which the father of the renowned Red Chera so eminently fulfilled by subduing the Kadambas in the Konkan coast. Aśoka could not brush aside the complaints of the eastern traders suffering under the marauding activities of the Nāgas, although his methods of redress were different.

#### *Under the Mauryas*

In the empire of Candragupta, trade both internal and external, received the vigilant attention of the state and of the municipalities. Without going into details, Megasthenes gives a very precise information on the nature of municipal control. "Of the great officers of state,

scme have charge of the market....." and then of the municipal bodies in Palibothra, ".....The members of the first look after everything relating to the industrial arts." The second attend to foreigners, the third register births and deaths "with the view not only of levying a tax,<sup>1</sup> but also in order that births and deaths among both high and low may not escape the cognizance of government. The fourth class superintends trade and commerce. Its members have charge of weights and measures, and see that products in their season are sold by public notice. No one is allowed to deal in more than one kind of commodity unless he pays a double tax. The fifth class supervises manufactured articles, which they sell by public notice. What is new is sold separately from what is old, and there is a fine for mixing the two together. The sixth and the last class consists of those who collect the tenths of the prices of the articles sold. Fraud in the payment of this tax is punished with death.....In their collective capacity they have charge.....also of matters affecting the general interest, as.....the regulation of prices, the care of markets, harbours and temples" (Str. XV. 1. 50).

Thus false weights and measurs were reduced, adulteration checked, prices kept in equilibrium, the underhand machinations of the black market brought under control, smuggling and evasion of king's dues<sup>2</sup> dealt severely. The control was no doubt rigorous ; nd drastic , but nothing short

1 A poll tax ?

2 The 'tithe' is not to be taken literally but in the more elastic sense in which it was used in the West.

of extreme measures could resolve the prevailing anarchy in the business world.

*Theories : principles of assessment*

The Arthaśāstra and the Dharmaśāstras dilate further the principles and rates of assessment. The śāstra data by themselves cannot be accepted as authoritative evidences of actual economic conditions. But they reflect the progress of financial thinking and the growing complexities and recurring crises in the market which kings were called upon to deal with and on which law-givers had to formulate their views.

"After (due) consideration the king shall always fix in his realm the duties and taxes in such a manner that both he himself and the man who does the work receive their due reward" (Manu, VII. 128). The Śukranīti enjoins that a duty is levied only when the buyer or seller is a gainer (IV. ii. 218 f.). "Having well considered (the rates of ) purchase and (of ) sale, (the length of ) the road, (the expense for ) food and condiments, the charges of securing the goods, let the king make traders pay duty."

Vikrayaṃ krayaṃ adhvānaṃ bhaktaṃ ca saparicchadaṃ  
Yogaḥṣemaṃ ca samprekṣya vaṇijāṃ kārayet karāṇ

Mbh. XII. 87. 13-4 ; cf Manu, VII. 127

The tax on internal industries, the Śāntiparva continues, is fixed after taking into account the outturn, receipts and expenditures and the state of the arts—utpat-  
tiṃ dānavṛttiṃ ca śilpaṃ samprekṣya cāsaḥkṛt. (Mbh.  
XII. 87. 14.)

*The sannidhātṛ*

In the Arthaśāstra the *sannidhātṛ* realises commercial dues as the *samāhartṛ* collects agricultural dues. This officer is to observe the fluctuations in demand and in the prices of internal products and foreign imports so that the scale of duties might be revised periodically. Import of foreign goods is to be encouraged. Foreign merchants coming by water or by land are to be favoured with remission of taxes so that they may keep some margin. (Parabhūmijaṃ paṇyam anugraheṇā vahayet. Nāvika-sāṛth-avāhebhyaśca parihāram āyatikṣamaṃ dadyāt). They cannot be sued for debts (II. 16).

These are concessions under special circumstances. The payments that a visiting merchant habitually makes are :

1. Śulka—toll or customs dues,
2. Vartanī—road cess,
3. Ativāhaka—conveyance cess,
4. Gulmadeya—levies at military stations, presumably for protection against brigandage,
5. Taradeya—ferry charges,
6. Bhakta—subsistence to the merchant and his followers,
7. Bhāga—share of profit.

—II. 16, 36

*Toll rates*

The toll covers both ingress and egress (niṣkrāmyaṃ praveśyaṃ ca śulkaṃ) of merchandise—external (bāhyam, i.e., arriving from country parts), internal (ābhyantaram) or foreign (ātithyam). The scheduled rates of import duty are :

1. Common goods 1/5 of value.
2. Flower, fruit, vegetables, roots, bulbs, *pallikya* (?), seed, dried fish and dried meat 1/6 „
3. Conch-shells, diamonds, jewels, pearls, corals and necklaces to be fixed by experts acquainted with time, cost and finish.
4. Fibrous garments (*kṣauma*), cotton cloths (*dukula*), silk (*krimītāna*), mail armour (*kankaṭa*), sulphuret of arsenic (*haritāla*), red arsenic (*manaśśilā*), vermillion (*hinguluka*), metals (*loha*), colouring ingredients (*varṇadhātu*), sandal, aloe (*agaru*), pungents (*kaṭuka*), ferments (*kiṇva*), dress (*āvaraṇa*), wine, ivory, skins (*ajina*), raw materials for *kṣauma* & *dukula*, carpets (*āstarāṇa*), curtains (*prāvaraṇa*), products yielded by worms (*krimijāta*) and wool of goat and sheep 1/10 to 1/15 of value.
5. Cloths (*vastra*), quadrupeds, bipeds, threads, cotton, scents, medicines, wood, bamboo, fibres (*valkala*), raw hides (*carma*), clay pots, grains, oil (*sneha*), soda (*kṣāra*), salt, liquor (*madya*), cooked rice 1/20 to 1/25 of value.

—Arthaśāstra II, 22.

The rate of 1/6 for group 2 is repeated in the *Agnipurāṇa* and in the *Smṛtis* (Gaut. X. 27; Manu, VII.

130-32; Viṣ. III. 24f.)<sup>1</sup> with further additions in the list, viz., medicinal herbs, honey, grass, firewood, scents, spices, leaves, skins, wickerwork, stonework, clarified butter, etc. On cattle (paśu), the import duty is not 1/-0 or 1/25 but 1/50 and so also on gold (hiraṇya).<sup>2</sup> Import of gold is encouraged for obvious reasons. The standard rate on imports as well as on all sales is also much lower than 1/5. The king is to take 1/20 of the profits upon the value fixed on each saleable commodity by experts in the settlement of tolls and duties and of prices (Manu, VIII. 398; Gaut. X. 26). This of course excepting grain and applies to both Vaiśyas and Śūdras (Manu, X. 120).<sup>3</sup> The Śukranīti gives another schedule.

Minerals : Gold, Gems glass and lead ...	1/2 of profit
Silver ...	... 1/3   ,,
Copper ...	... 1/4   ,,
Zinc and iron ...	... 1/6   ,,
Grass, wood, etc. ...	... 1/3, 1/5; 1/7, 1/10, 1/20 of profit—IV.
	ii. 233.38.

- 1 Haradatta reads the passage is Gautama and Viṣṇu indicating 1/60 which is improbable.
- 2 According to the Agnipurāṇa 1/5 or 1/6.
- 3 This according to the rendering of Nārāyaṇa and Nandana. Medhātithi, Govindarāja, Kullūka and Rāghavānanda give a different interpretation, viz.—on the profits of gold and cattle the king may take in necessity 1/20 instead of 1/50 if the commodity values more than 1 *kāṣṭhapaṇa*. The former is more acceptable for X. 120 and VIII. 398 both refer to all commodities except grain while VII. 130 to cattle and gold only.

Clearly the author of the *Arthaśāstra*, an economist statesman, is a much more rigorous protectionist than the law-givers of the canon. It should be observed moreover that while the assessments of the formci are made on value, those of the latter are charged on profit which falls much lighter on the traders.

According to Viṣṇu the import duty is generally fixed at 10 p.c. (III. 29; Baudh. I. 10. 18. 14) and the export duty at 5 p.c. of the price of the articles (III. 30). The rate of duty reflects the high rate of profit derived by traders.

Within the *śulka* the *Arthaśāstra* 'includes another charge, viz., the gate dues (*dvāradeya*) which are 1/5 of toll and which may be remitted if circumstances necessitate such favour (*dvāradeyaṃ śulkapañcabhāga anugrāhikaṃ vā yathādeśopakāraṃ sthāpayet*). Commodities shall never be sold where they are produced (II. 22).<sup>1</sup>

1 From much later inscriptions come toll-lists existing in practice and not in ideas alone.

2 *palikās* from every *ghaṭakakūpaka* of clarified butter and oil

2 *viṃsopakas* per mensem for every shop

50 leaves from every *chollikū* of leaves brought from outside the town—Alwar, 960 A. D. (E.I., III. 36)

1 *rūpaka* for each 20 loads (*pravahana* or *potha*) carried for sale

1 *rūpaka* on each cart filled whether going from or by the village

1 *karṣa* for a *ghaḍā* at each oilmill

13 *chollikās* of betel leaves by the Bhaṭṭas

*pellaka-pellaka* (?) by the gamblers

1 *āḍhaka* of wheat and barley from each *araghaṭṭa* (well with water wheel)

5 *palas* for *peḍḍā*

1 *viṃsopaka*, for each *bhāra* (2000 *palas* ?)

10 *palas* fromh eac *bhāra* of cotton, copper, saffron, gum resin, madder, etc.

1 *māṇaka* for each *droṇa* of wheat, mung, barley, salt, *vāla* and such other measurable objects.

—Bijapur inscription of Dhavala of Hastikundi, vv. 8.16 ; 940 A. D.  
But the list is of little use without the knowledge of the coins and measures.

*Road cess*

The *vantani* is realised by the *antapāla* or boundary officer. He is a police officer giving protection to caravans at the danger zones of the borders. Kauṭilya's teacher is very sceptic of the veracity of this incumbent ; he kills traffic by allowing thieves and taking taxes more than due. His illustrious student however holds that the officer encourages traffic by welcoming import (VIII. 4). But the suspicion is lurking ; for he is to make good whatever is lost or stolen from merchants within his jurisdiction. A road cess also exists in the fiscal conception of the Śukranīti although it goes under the general name of *śulka* (IV- ii. 213)<sup>1</sup> : but it is more strictly a *road cess* as opposed to a police tax. "For the preservation and repair of roads, he should have dues from those who use the streets" (258).

*Realisation*

"After carefully examining foreign commodities as to their superior or inferior quality and stamping them with his seal, he (the *antapāla*) shall send the same to the Superintendent of Tolls" ( *vaideśyaṃ sārtham kṛtasāraphalgubhāṇḍavicayanam-abhijñānam mudrām ca datvā preṣayedadhyakṣasya—Arthaśāstra II. 21.*) At the toll-gate of the city, the merchants have to give their whereabouts, amount of cargo, etc. Twice the toll has to be paid for no seal, 8 times for counterfeit seal. For falsifying the name of merchandise ( *nāmakṛte* ) 1½ *paṇas* have to be paid for load ( *sapādapanikaṃ vahanam dāpayet* ). Attempts at smuggling and escape of toll dues

1 "The *śulka* is levied on goods in market place, streets and mines."

are met with heavy fines. In case of bidding the enhanced price goes to the treasury along with the toll (II. 21).

Hence commodities for sale shall not be let off without being weighed, measured or numbered (*dhṛto*, *mito*, *gaṇito* *vā*). Import of weapons (*śastra*), armours (*varma*), *kavaca*, *loha*, *ratha*, *ratna*, *dhānya*, and *paśu*<sup>1</sup> is forbidden and leads to forfeiture of merchandise (*ibid*).

### Smuggling

The injunction of Manu, Viṣṇu and Yājñavalkya against smuggling is identical. "He who tries to avoid the toll by buying or selling at improper time (i.e., at night, etc.) or by falsely enumerating his goods shall be fined eight times the amount of duty" (Manu, VIII. 400). According to Viṣṇu the evader shall lose all his goods (III. 31). The king is to confiscate the whole property of a trader who exports goods of which the king has a monopoly or the export of which is forbidden (399 : Viṣ. V. 130 : Yāj. II. 261). The law of forfeiture thus applies to the entrance of goods laid under a ban as well as to the exit of goods under an embargo.

The Arthaśāstra lays down that the toll of inferior commodities shall be fixed and exemptions considered by experts (II. 20). Manu lets off small dealers with some trifle to be paid annually as tax (VII. 137).

### Praṇaya

The scale of *praṇaya* or benevolence levied to replenish a depleted treasury by king's officers is 1/6 of cotton, lac, flax,

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1 The ban on the import of armaments and accoutrements is intelligible but not so on *loha*, *ratna*, *dhanya* and *paśu*. The first two of these even occur in the customs schedule of II. 22.

barks, wool (rauma), silk (kauśeya), medicines (? kauṣaya), flowers, fruits, vegetables, firewood, bamboo, flesh and dried flesh (vallura);  $\frac{1}{2}$  of ivory and skin (dantājīn.). A license has to be obtained for sale of these articles. Internal dealers pay a fixed tax at the following rate :

In gold, silver, diamond, precious stones, pearls, corals, horses, elephants	...	...	...	...	...	50 karas
In cotton threads, clothes, copper, brass, bronze, perfumes, medicines, liquor	...	...	...	...	...	40 karas
In grains, liquids (rasa), metals (loha), carts (sakata)	...	...	...	...	...	30 karas
In glass and skilled artisans (mahākāravaḥ)	...	...	...	...	...	20 karas
Inferior artisans and animal-rearers (? vardhakipoṣakāḥ)	...	...	...	...	...	10 karas
In firewood, bamboos, stones, earthen pots, cooked rice (pakkāṇna), vegetables (haritapaṇyāḥ)	...	...	...	...	...	5 karas
Dramatists and prostitutes (kuśīlavā rūpajīvāśca)	...	...	...	...	...	$\frac{1}{2}$ their wages

—Arth. V. 2

### Rājakariya

Forced labour was another item which fell on all occupations. "Mechanics and artisans, as well as Śūdras who subsist by manual labour, he (the king) may cause to work (for himself) one (day) in each month" (Manu, VII. 138 : Gaut. X. 31 : Vāś. XIX. 28 : Viṣ. III. 32). The merchants may obtain commutation of *rājakariya* by selling one article every month to the king at discount rate (*arghāpacayena*, Gaut. X. 35).

### Port dues

Foreign ships touching at a port have to pay port dues to the *nāvādhyakṣa*, an officer resembling the port commissioner of our times. Duties are remitted for cargo spoilt by water in a sea-beaten boat (Arth. II. 28).

*Modopolies*

The state monopolies according to the Arthaśāstra are mines, salt centres and probably shipping. Mines involving small capital outlay are worked by the government itself. Otherwise these are leased out for a fixed share of the output or for a fixed rent (II. 12). The state also runs large industries like weaving mills under its own capital and management.

*Price-fixing*

Since toll rates are fixed on the estimated value or profit of merchandise, prices have necessarily to be fixed. And fixed price requires fixed weights and measures. Hence, "let (the king) fix (the rates for) the purchase and sale of all marketable goods, having (duly) considered whence they come, whither they go, how long they have been kept, the (probable) profit and the probable outlay." Once in 5 nights, or at the close of each fortnight, let the king publicly settle the prices for the (merchant). All weights and measures must be duly marked and once in six months let him re-examine them" (Manu, VIII. 401-03). The interval depends on the variability in price of goods.

*Control of buying and selling*

Authorised persons alone shall collect as middlemen grains and other merchandise. Otherwise they will be confiscated by the Superintendent of Commerce ( dhānyapaṇyanicayāṁścānujñātaḥ kuryuḥ ; anyathā nicitameṣāṁ paṇyādh-yakṣo gṛhṇīyāt, Arth. IV. 2 ). This seems to be to eliminate competition, speculation and hoarding. Again, "whenever

there is an excessive supply of merchandise, the Superintendent shall centralise its sale and prohibit the sale of similar merchandise elsewhere before the centralised supply is disposed of. Favourably disposed towards the people, shall merchants sell this centralised supply for daily wages,"— (paṇyabāhulyāt paṇyādhyakṣaḥ sarvapaṇyānyekamukhāni vikrīṇīta. Teṣvavikrīteṣu nānye vikrīṇīran. Tāni divasavetanena vikrīṇīran anugraheṇa prajānām. *Ibid*). This means a warehouse and clearance sale under state control and if customers competent to pay are not forthcoming, the goods may be disposed of for bodily labour.

### *From free to regulated economy*

This is how the law-giver and the economist met new contingencies. The derivation of a revenue from the new income was their primary concern but this required order in business. From fixation of the toll they are led to fixation of prices, of weights and measures. With increasing facilities given for protection, charges multiply, With the increasing complexities of the market, the state comes to grip with new problems. It must liquidate speculation and hoarding, break monopolies and corners, dissolve glut and scarcity and maintain the equipoise between dealers and customers. It must in short inaugurate a regulated instead of a free market. Indian economic theory thus parts company with Adam Smith and Turgot and falls in line with the rigorous totalitarianism of Friedrich List.



**BOOK IV**  
**BANKING AND CURRENCY**

Sidham vase 42 Vesākhamaṣe rāṇo Kṣaharātasa kṣatrapa-  
 pasa Nahapānasa jāmātara Dīnikaputrena Uṣavadātena saṃ-  
 ghasa cātudisasa imam leṇaṃ niyātitaṃ data cānena akṣay-  
 anivi kāhāpaṇasahasrāṇi trini 3000 saṃghasa cātudisasa ye  
 imasmim leṇe vasaṃtānaṃ bhavisati civarika kuśāṇamūle ca  
 ete ca kāhāpaṇā prayutā Govadhanavāthavāsu śreṇisu kolika-  
 nikāye 2000 vṛdhi paḍikaśata aparakolīkanikāye 1000 vadhi  
 pāyūnapaḍikaśata ete ca kāhāpaṇā apaḍidātavā vodhibhoja ete  
 civarikasahasrāṇi be 2000 ye paḍike sate eto mama leṇe  
 vasavuthāna bhikhunaṃ viśāya ekikasa civarika bārasaka yā  
 sahasra prayutaṃ pāyūnapaḍike sate ato kuśāṇamūla...ete ca  
 sarva srāvita nigamasabhāya nibadha ca phalakavāre caritratoti  
 bhūyo nena dataṃ vase 41 Kātikaśudhe panarasa puvāka vase  
 45 panarasa...niyutaṃ bhagavatāṃ devānaṃ brahmaṇānaṃ  
 ca karṣāpaṇasahasrāṇi satari 70,000 paṃcatrīśaka suvarṇa  
 kṛtā phalakavāre caritratoti.

—Nasik Cave Inscription

Success ! In the year 42, in the month of Vesākha,  
 Uṣavadāta, son of Dīnika, son-in-law of king Nahapāna,  
 the Kṣaharāta Kṣatrapa, has bestowed this cave on the  
 Saṃgha generally ; he has also given a perpetual endowment,  
 three thousand—3000 *kāhāpaṇas*, which, for the members  
 of the Saṃgha of any sect and any origin dwelling in this  
 cave, will serve as cloth money and money for outsidelife ;  
 and those *kāhāpaṇas* have been invested in guilds dwelling  
 in Govadhana,—2000 in a weavers' guild, interest one *pratika*  
 (monthly) for the hundred, (and) 1000 in another weavers'  
 guild, interest three quarters of a *pratika* (monthly) for the  
 hundred; and those *kāhāpaṇas* are not to be repaid, their

interest only to be enjoyed. Out of them, the two thousand—2000—at one *pratika* per cent. are the cloth money; out of them to every one of the twenty monks who keep the *vassa* in my cave, a cloth money of 12 (*kāhāpaṇas*). As to the thousand which have been invested at an interest of three quarters of a *pratika* per cent. out of them the money for *kuṣaṇa*.....and all this has been proclaimed (and) registered at the town's hall, at the record office according to custom.

Again the donation previously made by the same in the year 41, on the fifteenth of the bright half of Kārtika, has in the year 45, on the fifteenth.....been settled on the venerable gods and Brāhmaṇas, viz., seventy thousand—70,000—*kārṣāpaṇas*, each thirty-five making a *suvarṇa*, a capital (therefore) of two thousand *suvarṇas*. (This is registered) at the record office according to custom.



## CHAPTER I

### MONEY-LENDING AND CREDIT

Productive industries and unproductive business. From money to money-lending. Business loan. Famine loan. Instruments of credit : pledge, surety. Bond of debt ; acquittance. Rate of interest ; discriminating and differential rates ; accumulation ; forfeiture and moratorium. Illegal rates, condemnation of usury. Inheritance of debt and credit. Repudiation and debt suit. Service and slavery for default. Forcible realisation. Punishment for unpaid debt. Insolvency. The debtor's plight.

#### *Unproductive business*

Trade, the third of the *vāttās* was followed by the fourth, viz., usury. With the growth of trade,—the primitive agricultural and pastoral economy, inclusive, of course of small cottage industries, is modified under the stress of currency and credit. Money introduces itself as a new factor in the market, increasingly asserting its place in exchange, and fostering under its protective wings the speculative trader. Beside agriculture and cattle-rearing and other productive industries appears the art of making money simply by clever buying and selling or by lending one's hoarded wealth to others at interest. This means a partial breakdown of the self-sufficient agricultural-cum-industrial village and accentuation of economic disparity between the classes.

#### *Business loan*

Transactions of credit were fairly established by the post-Vedic times when 'business' was well on foot. These

did not begin with money. The owner of the land and merchandise might hire them out to enterprising people for a share of profit (Jāt. VI. 69; IV. 256; V. 436). There is the oft-quoted simile that a man sets up a business contracting a loan (iṇaṃ adāya; com. : 'taking goods on interest'), that his business succeeds so that he is not only able to pay off the old debt he had incurred but there is a surplus over to maintain a wife (Dn. II. 69; Mn. 39). In a more elaborate parable wealthy *gahapati*s and their sons seeing a shop-keeper shrewd, clever and resourceful, competent to support his sons and wife and from time to time to pay interest to money loaned, offers him wealth saying: "master shopkeeper, take this money and trade with it, support your sons and wife, and pay us back from time to time."

.....*gahapati* vā *gahapati*puttā vā adḍhā mahaddhanā mahābhogā te naṃ evaṃ jānanti—ayaṃ kho bhavaṃ pāpaṇiko cakkhumā ca vidhūro ca paṭibalo puttadāraṇ ca poṣetum ambhakaṇ ca kālena kālaṃ anuppadātun ti. Te naṃ bhogehi nimantanti—ito samma pāpaṇika bhoge karitvā puttadāraṇ ca poṣehi ambhakaṇ ca kālena kālaṃ anuppadehī ti. An. I. 177.

In the *Arthaśāstra*, interest on stock, i.e., loan invested for business (*prakṣepa*) is fixed at one-half of profit, payable every year, and accumulable up to a sum twice the principal (*mūlyadviguṇaḥ*) (III. II). According to the *Śāntiparva* the share for capital is as high as 6/7 (85·7 p.c.) and even 15/16 (93·75 p.c.) of the profit (60·24). The rule however seems to apply only between a capitalist employer and a hired hawker contracted on a profit-sharing basis.

Business apart, there were of course cases of borrowing and lending in cash and kind to be repaid with interest. Agricultural loan was an early practice of enlightened states-

man'ship and in famine doles were given to the indigent gratuitously or on terms of repayment at harvest.

### *Instruments of credit*

Debts might be secured or unsecured. The creditor might demand a surety for payment or a surety for appearance. For clearance of unpaid debt the heir of the former was liable, not of the latter (Manu, VIII. 159 f. ; Viṣ. VI. 41 ; Vṛ. XI. 41). Big commercial deals were made on credit on the security of a signet ring (Jāt. I. 121). The debtor's daughter might be taken as slave to secure against accumulated interest (No. 436). The pledgee of course did not acquire proprietary right on the pledge (ādhi) which was ruled by the laws of deposit. It was to be reconveyed when the debt was paid up (Arth. III. 12 ; Yaj. II. 58 f.) unless it was lost without the fault of the holder (Gaut. XII. 42). A productive pledge (i.e., usufructuary mortgage) is never lost to the debtor even in case of default (Arth. III. 12 ; Yaj. II. 58 f. ; Manu, VIII. 143 ; Viṣ. VI. 5) and it cannot be given away or sold under any circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

- 1 Governing a pledge and the two parties in it, the Arthaśāstra lays down: "In the absence of the creditor or mediator, the amount of the debt may be kept in the custody of the elders of the village and the debtor may have the pledged property reduced, or with its value fixed at the time and with no interest chargeable for the future, the pledge may be left where it is. When there is any rise in the value of the pledge or when it is apprehended that it may be depreciated or lost in the near future, the pledge may, with permission from the judges (dharmastha), or on the evidence furnished by the officer-in-charge of pledges, sell the pledge either in the presence of the debtor or under the presidency of experts who can see whether such apprehension is justified (III. 12)."

*Bond of debt*

There was considerable use of the instruments of credit. Merchants sometimes transacted between themselves on credit without any security. "Many traders borrowed money from him (Anāthapiṇḍika) on their bonds—to the amount of 18 crores ; and the great merchant never called the money in" (bahū vohārūpajivino pi ssa hatthato Paṇṇe āropetvā atthārasakoṭisaṃkhaṃ dhanam iṇaṃ gaṇhiṃsu, Jāt. 1. 227). But all loans secured or unsecured had to be confirmed by means of a written bond or agreement of debt (karaṇa. Manu, VIII. 154 coms. ; Vṛ. VIII. II ; iṇapaṇṇam) which the creditor (iṇāyika) had to present to the debtor when asking for any payment (Jāt. IV. 262). The city god of Sāvatti instructs a fairy to realise Anāthapiṇḍika's bad debt in the following manner : "Take the semblance of his agent ... repair to their houses with the bonds in one hand and pens in the other and say;—"Here is the acknowledgment of your debt—pay up the gold *kahāpaṇas* you owe."

tvam tassa āyuttakavesaṃ gahe tvā . . . ekena hatthena paṇṇam ekena lekhaṇiṃ gahe tvā tesam geham gantvā . . . idaṃ tumhākaṃ iṇapaṇṇam . . . tumhehi gahitakahāpaṇāni detha (Jāt. I. 230).

For every payment the creditor must always give the debtor a receipt and an acquittance on clearance. Otherwise he must pay interest to the debtor as he had obtained previously (Nār. I. 114 f. ; Vṛ. XI. 66).

*Rates of interest*

The just and normal rate of interest is laid down by law-givers as  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. per month or 15 p. c. per annum (Manu. VIII. 140 ; Vās. II. 51 ; Baudh. I. 5. 10,

22 ; Nār. I. 99 ; Vṛ. XI. 3. · Arth. III. 11). In Gautama the rate is 5 *māṣas* a month for 20 *kārṣāpaṇas* (XII ; 29). If the ratio, as laid down by commentator Haradatta, viz., 1 *kārṣāpaṇa*=20 *māṣas* is accepted then the rate works out perfectly to 15 p. c. per annum. But on the basis of Manu's equivalence, i.e., 1 *kārṣāpaṇa*=16 *māṣas* (VIII. 134-36) the rate is 18·75 p.c. per annum. Presumably the rate is higher in the earlier Sūtra work and Haradatta, a very late commentator, modified the scale of equivalence only to adjust the Sūtra rate to the more common rate of the later Smṛtis.

#### *Discriminating and differential rates*

According to the commentators Nārāyaṇa, Rāghavānanda and Nandana and according to Yājñavalkya (II. 37) the rate of 15 p. c. is for debt secured by a pledge. For unsecured loans the rates are 2, 3, 4 or 5 in 100 according to the *varṇas* :

i.e., for Brāhmaṇa debtor	...	24 p.c. per annum.
„ Kṣatriya „	...	36 „ „
„ Vaiśya „	...	48 „ „
„ Śūdra „	...	60 „ „

—Manu. VIII. 131 f Viṣ. VI. 7 Nār. I. 100.

Differential customary rates are given also in the Arthaśāstra, but not on the basis of caste discriminations. Apart from the just rate (*dharmyā*) of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  p.c. per month, these are 5, 10 and 20 respectively :

i.e., the commercial rate ( <i>vyavahārikī</i> ) is	...	60 p.c. per annum
the rate prevailing in forests ( <i>kāntā-rakānām</i> ) is	...	120 „ „
the rate among sea-traders ( <i>sāmu-drānām</i> ) is	...	240 „ „

—III. 11.

Special forms of interest are compound interest (*cakravāṛddhi*)<sup>1</sup> : periodical interest (*kālavāṛddhi*) in which the interest is to be paid with the principal within a fixed period<sup>2</sup> : stipulated interest (*kārita*), i.e., exceeding legal rate : corporal interest (*kāyika*) which is payable with bodily labour either of the debtor or of a pledged animal or slave :<sup>3</sup> daily interest (*śikhāvāṛddhi*) and the use of a pledge (*bhogalābha*) when no interest is claimed (Gaut, XII. 34 f : Manu. VIII, 153 ; Nār. I. 102-4 ; Vṛ. XI. 4-11).

### *Accumulation*

Interest can accumulate only up to a sum equal to the principal, after which it ceases (Gaut. XII. 30f ; Arth. III. 11). But usury was growing ahead, and later law-givers have to adjust their rules accordingly. Manu has : 'Interest payable with the principal shall never exceed the sum, or in the case of grain, fruit, wool or hair and beasts of burden, four times the loan, (VIII. 151)'. Subsequent law-books speak in more and more elastic terms, In some countries loan grows to twice the principal : in others 3, 4 or 8 times. Gold may grow to twice ; grain to thrice , clothes to four times ; liquids octuple ; interest on women and cattle may grow up to their issue (Viṣ. VI. 11-15 ; Nār. I. 106 f.). According to Vṛhaspati gold grows to twice ; clothes and

1 This form of interest is prohibited in the Arthaśāstra (III. 11).

2 'If a large or small interest is taken on condition that the loan is to be repaid on a certain date, and that, in case of non-payment, it is to be trebled or quadrupled, that is called periodical interest' —Haradatta.

3 See Manu, VIII. 153 Coms.

base metals thrice ; grain, edible plants, cattle and wool four times ; pot-herbs five times ; seeds and sugarcane six times ; salt, oil and spirits eight times (XI. 2).

### *Forfeiture and moratorium*

No interest accrues for a pledged loan where the pledge yields profit (Gaut. XII. 32 ; Manu, VIII. 143 ; Viṣ. VI. 5 ; Yāj. II, 58 ; Arth. III, 12) nor such a pledge (i.e., a usufructuary mortgage) can be given away or sold for default. If the pledge is misused, the creditor forfeits the interest and has to pay the price (Manu, VIII, 144 , Viṣ. VI, 6), for unauthorised use he forfeits half the interest (Manu, VIII. 145). The pledge must be reconveyed when the debtor is ready, i.e., when he pays up (Arth. III. 12). A moratorium of interest is prescribed for persons engaged in long sacrifices (dīrghasatra), diseased, living in teachers' place, minor (vālam) and pauper (aśāram) (Arth. III. 11) as well as for a person for whom it is physically impossible to pay, e.g., an imprisoned man (Gaut. XII. 33 and Haradatta). Payment of debt cannot be refused by the creditor but may be kept in others' custody free of interest. Debts neglected for ten years (daśavarṣopekṣitamṛṇamapratigrāhyam, III. 11) except in the case of minors, aged persons, diseased, involved in calamities, sojourning abroad shall not be received back.

### *Usury*

The strict injunctions of the Śāstras against violation of legal or customary rates together with the growing elasticity of the rules show that the practice shaped the theory rather than theory the practice. The Arthaśāstra (III. 11) and Yājñavalkya (II. 61) think that the welfare of state requires a strict security of lending transactions and prescribe fine for trans-

gressors. Manu forbids six special forms of interests (VIII. 153). While in earlier books moneylending is tolerated (Gaut. X, 6, XI. 21) it is condemned in later works in emphatic terms (Vās. II. 41 f; Baudh, 1. 5, 10, 23-25; Manu, III, 153, 165, 180) obviously because it degenerated into usury.<sup>1</sup>

### *Inheritance of debt and credit*

A debt unlimited by time is bequeathed to sons, grandsons or lawful heirs or joint partners of debt (*sahagrāhiṇaḥ pratibhuvo vā*, Arth. III. 11; Gaut. XII. 40). A debt is inherited down to three generations not to the 4th (Viṣ. VI. 27 f.; Nār. I. 4; Vṛ. XI. 49). Debt contracted for the benefit of a united family must be discharged by the members even if they have separated afterwards (Manu, VIII. 166; Viṣ. VI. 36; Nār. I. 13). A husband is responsible for his wife's borrowing, not a wife for her husband's except in the case of herdsmen, hunters, vintners, dancers and washermen who live and earn with their wife (Arth. III. 11). According to Viṣṇu, however, the husband or the son is not to pay the debt of his wife or mother except in the case of herdsmen, hunters etc. (VI. 32, 37). Money due by a surety, a commercial debt, a bridal fee (*śulkā*), debts contracted for spirituous liquor or in gambling, and a fine shall not involve the sons of the debtor (Gaut. XII. 41). For clearance of unpaid debt the heir of a surety for payment is liable, not of a surety for appearance (Manu, VIII. 159 f.; Viṣ. VI. 41; Vṛ. X. 41). From

<sup>1</sup> The Śāstra rules are plainly the reason why Aelian rushes into the statement. "The Indians neither put out money at usury, nor know how to borrow. It is contrary to established usage for an Indian either to do or to suffer a wrong, and therefore they neither make contracts nor require securities" (V L. iv. 1).

the Jātakas it appears that dues were inherited also on the creditor's side. It is for a deceitful debtor (dhāraṇako) to refuse to pay to the creditor's son on the creditor's death (IV. 45). Another vicious set ruined a merchant family (seṭṭhikula) by repudiating their debts. . . . "Those who hired their land or carried on merchandise for them, finding out that there was no son or brother in the family to enforce the payment, seized what they had in hands <sup>1</sup> and ran away as they pleased."

Ye pi nesam khettaṃ vā bhātā vā iṇaṃ codetvā gaṇhanto nāma n'atthīti attano attano hatthagataṃ gahetvā yathārucim palāyimsu, VI. 69.

#### *Repudiation & debt suit*

Of course repudiating a lawful debt is condemned and the perjurer becomes an outcast (vasalo, Sut. 120). For disputed cases, debt suits were resorted to. The bond was the most effective document, besides which there must be more than one witness, and at least two acceptable to both parties. A debtor cannot be sued simultaneously for more than one debt by one or two creditors (nānārṇasamavāye tu naiko dvau yugapadabhivadeyātāṃ anyatra pratiṣṭhamānāt) excepting in the case of a sojourner who is to pay in the order of borrowing (Arth. III, 11).<sup>2</sup>

- 1 Cowell and Rouse render 'hatthagatam' as 'what they could lay their hands upon' which should certainly be revised as above.
- 2 These rules give the lie direct to the remark of foreign memoirists : "Among the Indians one who is unable to recover a loan or a deposit has no remedy at law. All the creditor can do is to blame himself for trusting a rogue" (Meg. Fr. 27C. Nicol. Damasc. 44 ; Stob. Serm. 42).

*Payment by service and slavery*

A recognised form of payment both of principal as well as of interest was by personal labour (*kāyika*) and the creditor could claim this as a right if the debtor failed in his stipulation (Mbh. XII, 109. 18). Manu of course qualifies this rule with the clause—"unless the debtor is of superior caste to the creditor" (VIII. 177) which may well correspond to practice if for 'caste' is substituted 'power and position.' The creditor might even take the defaulting debtor or any of his wards into slavery as happened in the case of Isidāsi who was carried away by force in lieu of debt and accumulated interest (Therig, 444).<sup>1</sup>

*Realisation : force*

On the legality of force in realisation of debt, law-givers are of two opinions. In Āpastamba it is reprobated for a creditor to sit with his debtor hindering him from fulfilling his duties and thus forcing him to pay (I. 6. 19, 1). But force is approved in Manu (VIII. 49), Viṣṇu (VI. 18 f.) and Vṛhaspati (XI. 55). The creditor might employ an agent to realise debt by showing the bonds (Jāt. I. 230).

*Plight of insolvent debtor*

Turning from legal quibbles to actualities and realities of the situation, it may be observed that the debtor being the poorer and weaker party always stood at a disadvantage with the creditor irrespective of their castes. In the Anguttara-nikāya it is frankly admitted that if the debtor is poor he may be put to jail for any trifle ranging from 100 down to ½

<sup>1</sup> For enslavement from debt, see Bk. VI. Ch. I.

*kahāpana*, but not so if he is rich and powerful (I, 251). The imprisonment was preceded by severe humiliations and hecklings. One gets into debt in straits and when the interest falls due (*kālābhatam vaḍḍhim*) and he is a defaulter, the creditors press him (*codenti*), beset him (*anucaranti*), dogging his footsteps and vexing him, throwing mud at him in public or in a crowd and doing like things that cause pain (*ātapa-ṭṭhapana*. etc. Com.) and at last bind him (*bandhanti*) (An. III. 352). Creditors are known as heckling and pressing debtors for payment at very daybreak (Sn. I. 171). A debtor, though a Brāhmaṇa is pressed so hard by the creditors that he goes into the forest to commit suicide (Jāt. VI. 178). Another insolvent asks his creditors to appear with their bonds only to commit suicide in their presence (IV. 262). Such a terror they were that a whole settlement of defaulting carpenters shipped off overnight in an unknown voyage (IV. 159). No wonder, it is a bliss to be without debt (An. II. 68). The man who cooks his own humble pottage but is free from debt (*aṇṇi*) is the happiest man on earth (Mbh. III. 312, 115).

## CHAPTER II

### BANKING

Hoarding. Deposit and its laws. Origin of banking,—economic influence. Corporate banks. Industrial banks. Fixed deposits and endowments in guild banks. Real Property as deposit. Rate of interest on fixed deposits. Security and stability. Ubiquity of banks. Comparison between the North and the South.

#### *Hoarding*

As has been seen, usury was disreputable, and it was not always easy to recover a loan. Hence to lend one's hoarded money at interest was not preferred by all. Safety, rather than profit, was the prime consideration for many. They buried gold or coins underground, generally in a forest or in river bank (I. 227, 277, 323) or in some other lonely place. Huge amounts,—of the description of 18, 30, or 40 crores thus remained in the custodianship of the Earth though not as safely as the depositors expected. For kings and robbers were always vigilant over these troves and a flood or erosion might sweep away all traces of the buried treasure.

#### *Deposit : its laws*

An honest depositary was more reliable than a clod. Rules on deposit adumbrated in the Smṛtis show that to receive and properly discharge a deposit from a known person was a very common institution. The laws of debt either apply *ipso facto* to deposit or the rules governing deposit are formulated on the same lines as the rules of debt and pledge.

The Arthaśāstra also states that the laws of debt apply to deposits (upanidhi). In case of foreign invasion, natural calamities and accidents the depositary is not answerable for loss. Otherwise a used or lost deposit is not only to be requited but a fine is to be fixed (III. 19). The Jātakas are familiar with this practice. Treasures could be deposited in good faith to a person and to misappropriate it was penal (I. 375 ; II, 181). A depositary who spends a cash of a thousand pieces compounds by giving his daughter to wife to the depositor (III. 342) or with the same amount (VI. 521).

### *Origin of Banking*

Thus, much before the Christian era were developed the two prerequisites of banking, viz., the practices of lending money at interest and depositing property for safety. The former was morally retrograde because it had a definitely economic import and smacked of selfishness and avarice. The latter suffered under no moral stigma and the depositary even acquired virtue by acquitting himself unselfishly. These two institutions, ethically antagonistic but economically akin, fused into one under the dominating demands of the market. The honest and virtuous depositary found it worth while to lend the deposit to businessmen for interest, disregarding what moralists might say of him. The depositor in his turn claimed a part of the interest so derived. The latter thus obtained an interest from his deposit and the former an interest from its further investment. Thus deposits became safe. The depositor and the depositary met each other's demands, and so the depositary and the businessman in search of capital. And none had to stand on virtue, each had his returns in cash.

*Corporate Banks*

This development is clearly indicated in the statement of the Arthaśāstra that the rules of *upanidhi* (deposit) apply to *nikṣepa* (investment) (III. 12). That is, if one receives an investment he has to discharge his obligations in the same manner as if he receives a deposit simply on good faith. Of course individuals were not often competent to accept such obligations. It was the guilds and corporations who received deposits and lent them to business thus functioning as banks. This also is illustrated in the Arthaśāstra where it elaborates its unscrupulous revenue-making devices. "King's agents disguised as merchants may borrow from corporations bar gold and coin gold for various kinds of merchandise to be procured from abroad" (*samāje vā sarvapaṇyasamdohena prabhūtaṃ hiraṇyasuvarṇamṛṇaṃ grhṇīyāt*) and pretend to be robbed the same night (V. 2). Transactions of borrowing and lending are intimately associated with merchants and manufacturing activities and big magnates are attracted by the banking facilities even in an uncultivated tract of country (VII.11).

*Guild Banks*

Since deposits were invested in business, it was most profitable for the joint-stock concerns to receive them. The middleman's share could thus be dispensed with. Banking thus became an appendage of other business.<sup>1</sup> The industrial guilds became banks *par excellence*. The Arthaśāstra permits

1 It remained so under the great Seths and Shroffs down to the end of the 18th century when the Company traders first opened independent banks, viz., the Bengal Bank and the General Bank of India.

them to receive deposits (IV. 1). Ancient inscriptions present them in the fullest of their activity.

### *Endowments and Bank deposits*

Here they appear not only as banks but also as trustees and executors of charitable endowments. Capital amounts were received as fixed deposit never to be repaid. Interests were paid in kind to the beneficiaries of the endowment. Thus a weavers' guild at Govardhana received 2000 *kāhāpaṇas* from King Uṣavadāta and out of the interest gave 12 *kāhāpaṇas* (*bārasaka*) as cloth money to each of the twenty monks who kept the *vassa* in the Nasik Cave. Another 1000 *kāhāpaṇas* were invested in another guild for money for *kuṣaṇa* on behalf of the same monks (Nasik C. I. 12.v). Similarly by the lay devotee Viṣṇudattā the Sakāni, "...for the well-being and happiness of all beings, in order to provide medicine for the sick of the Saṃgha of monks of whatever sect and origin dwelling in this monastery on Mt. Trirāśmi, a perpetual endowment has been invested for all time to come with the guilds dwelling at Govardhana, viz., in the hands of the guild of *kularikas* (potters?), one thousand,—1000—*kārṣāpaṇas*, of the guild of *odayantrikas* (workers with hydraulic machines or water-pumps) two thousand, of the guild of...five hundred—500—, of the guild of *tilapiṣakas* (oil-pressers)..."and all this proclaimed and duly registered in the record office of the town hall (15. vii). By another, a pious merchant, "has been given as a perpetual endowment one hundred—100 *kāhāpaṇas* in the hands of the Saṃgha, out of this a cloth money (*civarika*) of 12 *kāhāpaṇas* is to be given to the ascetic who keeps the *vassa* here" (17. viii). In a Mathura Inscription of Huvīṣka's time, a lord makes an endowment depositing to the *rāka* (?) guild 550 *purāṇas*

and to the flour-makers' guild (*samitakaraśreṇī*) 550 *purāṇas* out of the monthly interest whereof 100 *Brāhmaṇas* should be served daily and the destitute and hungry according to a prescribed schedule.<sup>1</sup>

### *Real property as deposit*

The guild banks received not only cash deposit. They accepted immovable property like corn-field. They managed the property and assigned an interest out of its income. A Junnar Buddhist Cave Inscription records the investment of money with the guild of *vasakāras* (bamboo-workers) and the guild of *kāsākaras* (braziers) just on the same lines as the endowments of Nasik and Mathura. Another records the investment by a lay devotee—a member of the guild of *koṇacikas* of the income of a field at Veḍālikā for planting *karañju* trees and of another field for planting banyan trees.<sup>2</sup>

### *Interest on fixed deposit*

The rate of interest on fixed deposit, i.e., where "...those *kāhāpaṇas* are not to be repaid, their interest only to be enjoyed," is according to Nasik 12. v., 1 *pratika*<sup>1</sup> monthly for the 100 when the deposit is 2000 *kāhāpaṇas* and 3/4 *pratika* monthly for the 100 when the deposit is 1000 *kāhāpaṇas*. Thus,

the interest on fixed deposit of 2000 is 12 p.c. per annum

" " " 1000 " 9 p.c. " "

1 E. I. XXI. 10.

2 Bühler and Burgess: *Archaeological Survey of Western India*, IV. 24, 27.

3 *Pratika* seems to be the same as *kārṣāpaṇa* as Bühler thinks. This is however refuted by Senart, E. I., VIII. 8.

Nasik 17. viii. corroborates the former rate but the deposit is much less, only 100 *kāhāpaṇas*. The rate in the Mathura Inscription is much higher. The interest on 1100 *purāṇas*<sup>1</sup> is sufficient to enable 100 *Brahmaṇas* to be served daily and the destitute and hungry according to a fixed schedule. Probably the rates differed from place to place and from time to time and sometimes even in the same place and time according to the credit of the banks. In any case it was lower than the customary rate of 13 p.c. per annum of ordinary lending transactions because of the better security afforded to depositors. "The low rate of the interest in fact is an index at once of the security and stability of the banks, their efficiency, permanence and prosperity which attracted to them even royal deposits and benefactions."<sup>2</sup>

*Universality of banks : cf. North and South*

The execution of the objects of the endowments required much extra-professional skill, e.g., planting trees, providing medicine, supplying ghee and the like. Big deposits were distributed over more than one bank obviously with a view to additional security. The banking operation of guilds and businessmen was not confined to any particular place and time after its beginning which is traced back to the Christian era. The Gupta inscriptions record similar benefactions of deposits (*akṣayanivī*) of which the interest alone was appropriated for charity on behalf of *bhikṣus* and the capital kept in tact. D. B.

<sup>1</sup> Silver coin, not copper *kārṣāpaṇa*.

<sup>2</sup> R. K. Mukherji : *Local Self-Government in Ancient India*, p. 98.

Spooner who discovered no less than sixteen specimens of a seal at Basarh from Gupta times bearing the legend 'śreṣṭhi-nigamasya', is led to remark: "Banking was evidently as prominent in Vaiśālī as we should have expected it to be judging from the notice in Manu to the effect that the people in Magadha were bards and traders." <sup>1</sup> But the South led the West and the East in these activities. There are profuse South Indian Inscriptions of grants providing for sacred lamps at shrines sometimes received in kind according to the convenience of the donors and trustees. The point of difference between the Northern and Southern inscriptions is that the rate of interest of the latter is a bit higher ranging between 12·5 and 50 p.c. while that of the former is between 9 and 12 p.c.<sup>2</sup> In South India moreover such deposits were received not only by industrial guilds but also by village unions who invested the deposit in public works.<sup>3</sup>

1 *Annual Report of Archaeological Survey*, 1913-14, p. 122.

2 R. K. Mukherji : *Op. cit.*, pp. 118f.

3 Hultzsch : *South Indian Inscriptions*.

## CHAPTER III

### EXCHANGE AND CURRENCY

Origin of currency. Barter. Standard media of exchange. Transition to currency. Foreign or Indian origin? Foreign coins and their influence. Persian *siglos*. Roman *aureus* and *denarius*. Barter holds ground.

Development of currency. 'Circulating monetary weights.' Metric divisions. Attestation : punch-marks,—by traders, by local government. Local character of coin-types.

Metallic contents of currency. Gold, Silver, Copper,—the standard *kārṣāpaṇa*, the tokens of *kārṣāpaṇa*, fluctuating relations. The exchange ratio,—gold and silver, gold and copper, fluctuating relations. Other metals.

State monopoly of currency? Private coinage. State regulation. Debasement of coins. The *rūpasutta* or science of currency and coinage.

#### *Barter*

The evolution of currency, by ushering in Credit and Banking, changed the face of the economic world. But it was a slow and long process. The primitive method of exchange was virtually confined to barter. As late as in Dharmasūtras and the Pali canon it is a very common practice (Cv. VI. 19. 1). Gautama ( VII. 16 f. ) and Vāśiṣṭha ( II. 37 f. ) permit this on special commodities. A potter barter his wares for rice, beans (*mugga*) or pulse ( *kālāya* ) ( Mn. 81 ). The system prevails in as small scale as obtaining a meal for a gold pin ( Jāt. VI. 519 ) or in

as big scale as between 500 wagons and wares of corresponding value ( Jāt. I. 377 ).

### *Standard media of exchange*

From barter of goods the next stage was to use certain commodities of general value as standard media of exchange. The earliest and commonest of these were the cow and rice. The medium of course varied according to the class within whom it circulated. Among the military class horses suited better. The tribute proceeds of a day are estimated at above the value of 1,000 horses ( Mbh. III. 195. 9 ) and a teacher's fee is measured as 800 steeds of the best breed ( V. 106. 11 ). Slaves, rice and other food grains were similarly used ( Jāt. I. 124 f. ; Mil. 341 ). Pāṇini, besides mentioning *kamsa*, *śūrpa* and *khārī*, i.e., grains of these measures, testifies to the circulation of *go-puccha* or cow's tail ( V. 1. 9 ) and of *vasana* or pieces of cloth of definite value ( V. 1. 27 ).

### *Evolution of exchange and currency*

The media of exchange and their replacement by a metallic currency depends on the stage of social evolution. Since this was not uniform among all communities and in all localities the means of exchange necessarily varied even at the same time. Skins of game animals were the most suitable media for the nomadic and hunting aborigines. For pastoral tribes like the Ābhīras domestic animals like the cow and not their skins are the appropriate measures of value. In the agricultural stage, agricultural products, particularly the staple corn came to be used as currency. As commerce developed diverse articles such as garments, coverlets and goatskins became circulating media ( Av. IV. 16 ). Metals and shells, first worked into ornaments, turn

into media of exchange and then into units of currency. The former stage was reached though on a very limited scale and within limited circles at the time of the early Vedic literature. The latter and the final stage is seen for the first time in the Vinaya,—the 11th and 12th Bhikkhuṇī Nissaggiya Rules and the Cullavagga.<sup>1</sup>

*Currency : Foreign or Indian origin ?*

These and many other evidences refute the theory of foreign origin of Indian metallic currency propounded by Kennedy and Smith. It has been held that "introduction into India of the use of coins, that is to say, metallic pieces of definite weight authenticated as currency by marks recognised as a guarantee of value, may be ascribed with much probability to the 7th century B. C. when foreign maritime trade seems to have begun."<sup>2</sup> Now foreign maritime trade began much earlier, and the earliest *kārṣāpaṇa* coins found in India bear no evidence of foreign influence. On the existence of an independent Indian coinage in the 5th and 4th centuries B. C. Rapson argues :—(a) the square Indian form cannot be traced to the round-shaped Western coinage, (b) the square coin was so firmly established in cir. 200 B. C. that it was imitated by the earliest Greek settlers, viz., Demetrius, Pantalion and Agathocles, (c) and it is represented in the sculptures of Bodh Gaya and Barhut. Thus native coins were in circulation along with the Persian siglos in the Achemenian period.<sup>3</sup>

1 *Māsakarūpassa*, V. 8. 2 ; XII. 1.1. "It is evident from the use of the word 'rūpa here that stamped pieces of money were known in the valley of the Ganges as early as the time when the Cullavagga was composed." Rhys Davids: *Vinaya Texts*, foot-note.

2 *Imperial Gazetteer*, II. 135.

3 *J. R. A. S.*, 1895, pp. 869-71.

*Influence of foreign coins : Persian siglos*

Of course Smith is true so far as with the growing trade and other contact with the West, foreign coins circulated in India and influenced the native coinage. Since gold in relation to silver had a higher value abroad than in India, <sup>1</sup> foreign merchants exchanged their silver for Indian gold. This accounts for the large number of silver coins found in India. The Persian *siglos* thus circulated freely in Indian satrapy (cir. 500-331 B. C.) and this is confirmed by the adoption of the Persian weight standard for their silver coin by the Bactrian princes in India "with the object of bringing the Græco-Indian silver coinage into relation with the Persian coinage, in such a way that two Greek hemidrachms of about 40 grains might be the exact equivalent of a Persian *siglos* of 80 grains."<sup>2</sup>

*Roman aureus and denarius*

In the days of the *Periplus*, among the imports to Barygaza are "gold and silver coin, on which there is a profit when exchanged for the money of the country" (49). "The profit on the exchange was due to the superiority of the Roman coinage to that of India, which latter was still crude, of base metal (bronze or lead) for which even the bullion (copper, tin and lead) was imported."<sup>3</sup> The Roman *aureus* and *denarius* were current throughout western India and strongly influenced the Kuṣāṇa and Kṣatrapa coinages. The *dināra*

<sup>1</sup> See *infra.*, p. 363.

<sup>2</sup> Rapson, *op. cit.*, pp. 867 f.

<sup>3</sup> Schoff. But gold and silver currency was known in India from much earlier times.

appears as a current coin, and finds its place in later Smṛtis (Vr. X, 14 f.) and epigraphic records. The Yueh-Chi Kings in India struck their coins in imitation of Rome so that "to the present day ancient drachmae are current in Barygaza, coming from this country (Bactria) bearing inscriptions in Greek letters and the devices of those who reigned after Alexander, Apollodotus and Menander" (Peri. 47). After the conquest of Kabul, Kadphises I imitated the coinage of Augustus and Tiberius (14-38 A. D.). When Roman gold of the early Emperors began to pour into India in payment for her merchandise and as the Roman coin was accepted throughout the commercial world at that time, the advantages of a gold currency and of the Roman standard weight were realised. For the facility of trade Kadphises II struck and issued the orientalised *aurei* on a large scale, agreeing in weight with their prototypes and not much inferior in purity.

#### *Continuation of barter*

Thus metallic currency, born and brought up in the soil, was influenced by foreign coinage. But money regulated only a part of the business of the land. Traffic by barter held its ground all through.<sup>1</sup> When a dog is bought for a *kahāpaṇa* and a cloak (Jāt. II. 247) and a doctor is paid with 16,000 *kahāpaṇas* together with two slaves, carriages and horses (Vin. I. 272), we find barter and money exchange at the same breath both among the high and the low. At

<sup>1</sup> It still prevails in this country. It is wrong for Rhys Davids and Mrs. Rhys Davids to hold that "the older system of traffic by barter had entirely passed away never to return." *Buddhist India*, p. 100; *Cambridge History*, p. 217.

the time of the Milinda, in the land of the Punjab, "in a trader's shop oilseed and peas and beans can be either taken in barter for a small quantity of rice or peas or beans bought for a small price decreasing in order according to requirement."

Āpanikassa āpaṇe tila-mugga-māse partittakena pi taṇḍula-mugga-māsenā appakena pi mūlena upādāy' upādāya gaṇhanti, 341.

Barter was known even in foreign trade as late as in the age of the Antonines. "Traders to India tell us that the Indians give their own wares in exchange for those of the Greeks without employing money, even though they have gold and copper in abundance." (Pausanias, III. xii. 3.)

#### *'Circulating monetary weights'*

Currency, in its first stage, was a metallic medium of exchange of standard weight. Rhys Davids says, "Coins may, I think, be legitimately used in two senses, firstly, of pieces of metal bearing the stamp or mark of some person in authority as proof of their purity, and of their being of full weight; and secondly, of pieces similarly stamped, but thereby acquiring a value beyond that of an equal weight of metal (by the mark or stamp implying a promise to receive the coin at a higher than its intrinsic value).....Now there was a time in India, before coins in either of these senses were struck, when mere pieces of bullion without a stamp at all, or merely with some private stamp, were used as money—that is as a medium of exchange, and the word *kārṣāpaṇa*..... may mean either coins proper of the weight of a *karṣa* or only such pieces of metal of that weight. The latter

was almost certainly its original meaning both in Sanskrit and Pali....."<sup>1</sup> Quoting the views of Thomas, Rhys Davids agrees in the conclusion that " 'True coins in our modern sense' are not mentioned in any Indian work certainly pre-Buddhistic, but 'circulating monetary weights,' were in use long before."<sup>2</sup> In that stage metals had to be weighed in scales and given for a purchase. There were different standards for the different metals of gold, silver and copper. But all these standards start from a fixed weight, viz., that of the *raktika* or red seed, or of the *kṛṣṇala* or black seed of the *guñja* berry approximately about 1·8 grains. These standards are—

Gold	Silver	Copper
5 kṛṣṇala or raktika = 1 māṣa	2 kṛṣṇala = 1 māṣaka	80 kṛṣṇala or raktika or
16 māṣa = 1 suvarṇa	16 māṣaka = 1 dharāṇa	kāṅkani = 1 kārṣā-
4 suvarṇa = 1 pala or	or purāṇa	paṇa
1 niṣka	10 dharāṇa = 1 śatamāna.	
10 pala = 1 dharāṇa.		
— Manu VIII. 134-37; Vis. IV. 7-13; Vṛ. X. 14f; Nār. Ap. 58.		

*Punch-marks : by shroffs and local authorities*

The metallic pieces of fixed weight, which thus got into the market, became the first coins. The merchants or money-changers through whose hands they passed affixed punchmarks to them in recognition of their weight and purity, evidently to obviate the necessity of repeated weighing and testing. Cunningham was the first to resolve these marks on extant coins : "I have a suspicion

1 *Numismata Orientalia : Ancient Coins and Measures of Ceylon*, p. 3.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

that several of the symbols may have been the private marks of ancient moneychangers. At the present day these men are still in the habit of placing their own particular stamps on the rupees that pass through their hands, so that when any of the coins come back to them again, they know their value without making a second testing."<sup>1</sup> With the growing circulation of 'monetary weights' and the realisation of their usefulness by the civil authorities, the punch-marks became the affair not of private dealers but of local authorities in a district or town. "The greater exactness of weight and the security against fraud afforded by the imperial coinage and the best of native coinages have rendered the use of the money-changer's private stamp less and less necessary. If then, in ancient times, the issue and regulation of the coinage was mainly or exclusively in the hands of the local authorities, the use of these distinguishing marks must have been universal and generally recognised....." "The merchants or money-changers, to whom we have attributed the obverse punch-marks, had simply to submit their coins to the chief authority in the district, who rejected such as were deficient in weight or quality of metal, and sanctioned such as were approved by marking them with his official stamp, which may perhaps be identified with the solitary punch-mark so often found in the centre of the reverse. The occasional occurrence of more than one of these reverse punch-marks on a coin is naturally explained by supposing the coin to have

1 *Coins of Ancient India*, p. 58.

passed current in more than one district, and consequently to have been officially tested more than once.”<sup>1</sup>

### *Local character of coinage*

Rapson's inference is corroborated by the passage in the Visuddhimagga which indicates that every place which issued coinage had its own distinguishing mark or marks stamped on it, by observing which the shroff could at once tell from which place any particular coin came. “Discoveries of punch-marked coins with their provenances definitely known.....give rise to the incontestible conclusion that they constitute ‘coinages’ peculiar to three different provincial towns,—one belonging to Takṣaśilā of North-West India, the second to Pāṭaliputra of Eastern India and the third to Vidisā of Central India.”<sup>2</sup> Even up to a later stage Indian coins preserved their local types. The great Empires did not enter a homogeneous coinage. “Each of such an empire has, as a rule, retained its own peculiar coinage, and this with so much conservatism in regard to the types and fabric of the coins, that the main characteristics of these have often remained unchanged, not only by changes of dynasty, but even by transference of power from one race to another.”<sup>3</sup> In the extended dominions of the Graeco-

1 Rapson : *Op. cit.*, pp 872 and 874,

2 D. R. Bhandarkar : *Ancient Indian Numismatics*.

3 Rapson : *Catalogue of Andhra and Kṣatrapa Coins*, p. xi. The author cites the instances of Greek Princes Pantaleon and Agathocles retaining the Taxila type, the Scythian Rañjubula retaining the earlier Greek type in Mathura, the Guptas continuing the type established by the Western Kṣatrapas in Gujarat.

Indian and Indo-Scythian princes or of the Guptas or of the Hūnas, distinct varieties of coins were in circulation in different districts at the same time. The provenance of the coins is sufficient evidence to this fact.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Metallic substances*

The metal so stamped and used differed in the districts. The standards adopted might be gold, silver or copper. After Kadphises II introduced gold coinage in the 1st century A. D., it continued to be the standard money for a long time. The Western Kṣatrapas retained silver currency in Mehoa, Gujarat and Kathiawad. In Besnagar of Eastern Malwa again, all the finds from pre-Mauryan to the Gupta times have been copper *kārṣāpaṇas*.

#### *Gold coins*

The first to get into coinage was gold. Gold ornaments and jewellery being commonly used as a form of reward or payment, the transition to coinage was easy. A clear example of this is *niṣka* which in the R̥g-veda meant a necklet or medallion, in later times became successively a unit of weight of gold and a gold coin.

1 The presentation of divinities of different faiths on the coins of Kaniṣka and Huviṣka, viz., Greek, Scythic, Zoroastrian, Vedic and Buddhist gave rise to the theory that those kings were supporters of an eclecticism in religion. Rapson explains this differently. "The natural explanation of this diversity is that these various classes of coins were current in the different provinces of a large empire.....The coins, no doubt, reflect the particular form of religion which prevailed in the district in which they were struck." Rapson: *Andhra and Kṣatrapa Coins*, p. xii. footnote.

In the Vedic times "a gold currency was evidently beginning to be known in so far as definite weights of gold are mentioned."<sup>1</sup> These are the *niṣka*, the *śatamāna* the *suvarṇa*, the *pāda* and the *krṣṇala*.<sup>2</sup> Pāṇini knows several of these (V. 1) and the Smṛtis cite them as weight standards. Gold coins occur in the Arthaśāstra (II. 14) and in the Jātakas,—e.g., the *nikkha* (IV. 460 f. VI. 246 f.) the *suvarṇa* (VI. 69, 186) and the *suvarṇamāsaka* (IV. 106; V. 164). The *kaḥāpaṇa* also sometimes appears as a gold coin (I. 478). The Sāmantapāsādikā says that a *kaḥāpaṇa* may be of gold, silver or copper.<sup>3</sup> The *hiraṇya* while generally indicating bullion in compound with *suvarṇa*, sometimes occurs also as gold coin, as for example when Anāthapiṇḍika purchases the Jetavana by paving it with these coins. But there have been no actual finds of gold coins from those early times. "Some thin gold films with punch-marks on them were found in the Sakiya Tope, but these were too flimsy to have been used in circulation as coins."<sup>4</sup>

### Silver coins

Silver was a rarer metal in India. Reference to silver in Buddhist canonical works is much more scarce than to gold and other metals.<sup>5</sup> In fact Buddhaghosa

1 Macdonell and Keith: *Vedic Index*, II. 505.

2 By citing references from Vedic texts, D. R. Bhandarkar attempts to show that these were not mere money weights but definite denominations of coins. *Ancient Indian Numismatics*.

3 Rhys Davids: *Ancient Coins and Measures*, and IV. 3.

4 Rhys Davids: *Buddhist India*, p. 100.

5 Mrs. Rhys Davids: *J. R. A. S.*, 1901, p. 877.

omits silver altogether while defining *rūpiya* as stamped piece of gold, copper and bronze, wood and lac or any of these worked up into ornaments (Vin. III. 239 f.). But there is no warrant to say that "no silver coins were used."<sup>1</sup> For Buddhaghosa himself admits elsewhere of the existence of silver *kārṣāpaṇas* which figure also in the state mint of the Arthaśāstra (*rūpyarūpa*,—Com. *kārṣāpaṇa*, II. 12). According to Associated Press news of 19th June, 1945, more than 100 silver punch-marked coins belonging to the 4th century B. C. have been found in the Gorakhpur district and acquired by the U. P. provincial museum. If silver, was scarce in Indian mines, this was imported from foreign merchants for Indian gold and thus a large number of silver punch-marked coins actually discovered are accounted for. The comparative scarcity of silver explains the depreciation of silver weight standards in the Smṛtis. According to these a silver *dharaṇa* weighs 58 grains to which agree the *karṣapaṇa* silver coins actually found. A futile attempt at currency reform is seen in the Arthaśāstra where it tries to bring the metrology of the three metals to the same standard.<sup>2</sup>

Rhys Davids: *loc. cit.*

According to the Arthaśāstra, 88 *gaurasārṣapa* = 1 *māṣa*, 16 *māṣa* = 1 *dharaṇa* (silver).

" " Manu, 90 *gaurasārṣapa* = 1 *māṣa*, 16 *māṣa* = 1 *suvarṇa* (gold). Thus the Arthaśāstra's *dharaṇa* (silver) is less than Manu's *suvarṇa* (gold) by only 32 *gaurasārṣapas* or 1·8 *ratīs* (3 grs.),—the degree of error being explained by the fact that the weight of a white mustard seed may slightly vary in different parts of the country. See *supra*, p. 275, table.

**Copper coin :** *the standard kārṣāpaṇa*

In the post-Vedic period the *kārṣāpaṇa* emerges as a new class of coin seen for the first time in Pāṇini and the Pali canon. Like the other coins, it at first meant the weight of any metal,—according to extant copper coins, 146 grains. "Hence it probably is that, whereas the unit of current money in Buddhist times was evidently the bronze *kaḥāpaṇas*, passages are here and there met with which either explicitly refer to gold coins or seem to imply gold, as much as we, for instance, can speak of 'pennyweights' of gold... ..*Suvanna* and *kaḥāpaṇa* are distinguished in Jātaka IV. 12. A leaden *kaḥāpaṇa* is spoken of (Jāt. I. 7). But the identification of *kaḥāpaṇa* with copper pieces in Jāt. I. 425, 426, and the statement in the Vinaya Commentary (IV. 256) that 4 *kaḥāpaṇas*=1 *kamsa* (bronze or copper coin) would alone be sufficient to fix its substance *qua* coin."<sup>1</sup> In Manu and Viṣṇu the *kārṣāpaṇa* is the weight standard exclusively of copper. Throughout the Jātaka stories the copper *kaḥāpaṇa* is the standard coin in circulation as is shown by the frequent omission of the denomination after the amount whereas other coins are mentioned when intended (Jāt. IV. 378; VI. 96, 97, 332). If these coins do not survive in as much quantity as might be expected it is because it is a more perishable metal than silver and apt to be melted into domestic utensils. The mention of *kārṣāpaṇa* in Manu, Viṣṇu, Yājñavalkya and the Sātavāhana Inscriptions and its discovery in the excavations at Ben-nagar bring its career down to the 4th century A.D.

1 Mrs. Rhys Davids : J, R. A. S., 1901, p. 878.

*Tokens of kārṣāpaṇa*

The standard *kārṣāpaṇa* had its token coins. In Pali literature occur the *kahāpaṇa*, half *kahāpaṇa*, *pāda* or quarter *kahāpaṇa*, *māsaka* or  $1/16$  *kahāpaṇa* and *kākaṇī* or  $1/80$  *kahāpaṇa* (Vin. II. 294, Jāt. I. 121, 340; III. 448). Even *sippika* or cowry shells are used as petty coin (I. 426). The Arthaśāstra distinguishes between the standard and token coins as *koṣapraveśāyam*, i.e., those which deserve to be received into the treasury, and *vyavahāriṇa*, i.e., those which are current in the market. The tokens are  $1/2$  *paṇa*,  $1/4$  *paṇa* (*pāda*),  $1/8$  *paṇa* (*aṣṭabhāga*),  $1/16$  *paṇa* (*māṣaka*),  $1/32$  *paṇa* (*ardhamāṣaka*),  $1/80$  *paṇa* (*kākaṇī*),  $1/160$  *paṇa* (*ardhakākaṇī*) (II. 12).<sup>1</sup> Coins excavated at Besnagar correspond approximately to 146 grains, the weight of a *kārṣāpaṇa* and to its fractions of  $1/2$ ,  $1/4$ ,  $1/8$ , and  $1/16$  thus pointing these to be *kārṣāpaṇa* and its subdivisions.<sup>2</sup>

*Fluctuation*

The value of the *kārṣāpaṇa* of course changed with the varying value of copper. This is clear from the observation of Buddhaghosa that at the time of King Bimbisāra, at Rājagaha 5 *māsakas* were equal to 1 *pāda* and 4 *pādas* were equal to 1 *kārṣāpaṇa*, which is corroborated by the Jātaka reference that a 4- *māṣaka* piece is of lower value than a *pāda* (III. 448). Buddhaghosa further warns that the *kahāpaṇa* of 20 *māṣakas* is the

1 These minute subdivisions are effected by the mixture of alloys.

2 Annual Report of Archaeological Survey, 1913-14, pp. 220ff; 1914-15, p. 87.

ancient *nīlakahāpaṇa*,<sup>1</sup> not the Rudradāma or *kahāpaṇa* of 16 *māsakas*. Obviously in the scholiast's knowledge the depreciated standard was adopted and followed from the time of the Kṣatrapa king.

*The exchange ratio. Gold : Silver*

Neither was the ratio between gold, silver and copper steady. In a Nasik Cave Inscription, 1 *suvarṇa* is given as equal to 35 *kārṣāpaṇas* presumably the silver standard otherwise known as *dharāṇa* or *purāṇa*. According to the Arthaśāstra's metrology the silver *dharāṇa* and the gold *suvarṇa* are almost of the same weight and on that basis the ratio between gold and silver is 35 : 1. But as a matter of fact the silver standard was depreciated because of the rarity of the metal and the extant silver coins generally conform to Manu's weight for a *puraṇa* which is about 58 grains. The rate of exchange between gold and silver on the basis of Manu and the Nasik Inscription thus becomes  $58 \times 35 : 146$ ; i.e., 14 : 1 approximately, not very far from the present rate. From the Periplus however, Cunningham has shown that gold was to silver as 8 : 1 gold being much cheaper in India than in Persia.<sup>2</sup> The same ratio according to the Śukranīti is 16 : 1 (IV. ii. 181 ff.).

*Gold : Copper*

The relation between gold and copper presents still more difficulties. According to Vṛhaspati (and Kātyāyana), the weight of a *suvarṇa* or *dīnāra* is 124 grains and that

1 The *kālakahāpaṇa* is noted in Jātaka No. 536.

2 *Coins of Ancient India*, p. 5.

of a *karṣa* 146·4 grains and 48 *Kārṣāpanas*=1 *suvarṇa* or *dināra* (X. 14 f.). Thus the exchange rate between gold and copper is  $146 \times 48 : 124$  or  $57 : 1$  approximately. Copper is thus almost 20 times its present value. This is intelligible when there is no intermediate silver coin between gold, and copper as appears under the Kuṣāṇas and the Guptas. The Śukranīti, which gives the rate between gold silver and copper, fixes it at  $16 : 1$  and  $80 : 1$  respectively so that gold and copper stand at  $1280 : 1$ . The remarkable variation in exchange rates is explained by the variation in regional distribution of metals whether obtained from native soil or through foreign exchange and by the still infant attempts of business communications to break through regional barriers.

#### *Other metals*

Coins might be of other metals beside gold, silver and copper. The Nidānakathā speaks of lead *kahāpanas*. Coins of that metal have been discovered from about the beginning of the Christian era belonging to Strato, Azes and Rañjubula and to the Andhrabhṛtya dynasty. Nickel was traced by Cunningham in the money of the Indo-Grecian kings and it was surmised to have been used by the Kṣudrakas and the Mūlavas in the time of Alexander.<sup>1</sup> Potin<sup>2</sup> was used by Vilivāyakura and his successors in the district round about Kolhapur, by the Andhrabhṛtya kings, exclusively in the Chanda district of the Central Provinces and by the Kṣatrapa dynasty founded

1 'White iron.'

2 An alloy of yellow and red copper, lead, tin and some dross.

by Caṣṭana. Buddhaghosa even says that *māṣakas* of wood, bamboo, palm-leaf or lac might pass current if they bore the requisite impression of *rūpa*.

### *State and private coinage*

From the very nature of its origin it may be presumed that coinage was not a state monopoly. It is wrong to hold that from the earliest times this was the privilege of the state,<sup>3</sup> and Mrs. Rhys Davids is right to assert that "there is no evidence whatever to show that these instruments of exchange (the Jātaka coins) constituted a currency of standard and token coins issued and regulated by any central authority."<sup>1</sup> Coins, at least in the early stages of their growth, might be struck and issued by individual traders, guilds, municipal bodies and district or central authorities. In theoretical works like the Arthaśāstra, currency is worth being reserved as a state concern. But even here the state goldsmith is to employ artisans to manufacture gold and silver coins from the bullion of citizens and country people (*sauvarṇikaḥ pauraḥ jānapadānām rūpyasuvarṇam āveśanībhiḥ kārayet*, II. 14) without charge of any brassage. Only "in getting a *suvarṇa* coin (of 16 *māṣas*) manufactured from gold or from silver, one *kākaṇi* ( $\frac{1}{4}$  *māṣa*) weight of the metal more shall be given to the mint towards the loss in manufacture."

### *Regulation : debasement*

The only way by which the central authority could regulate the currency was by way of the weight of the

3 D. R. Bhandarkar : *Ancient Indian Numismatics*.

1 Mrs. Rhys Davids : J. R. A. S. 1901, p 877.

pieces (Manu, VIII. 403 ; Vāś. XIX. 13). The Arthaśāstra demands the strict maintenance of the standard weight and severely reprimands lowering by even one *māṣa*. But this was not always possible, and a coin was perforce debased when the supply of its metal fell short. Debasement might be effected either by reducing the fixed weight or by increasing the alloy while maintaining the fixed weight. The former may be the reason of the mutability of weight noticeable in some of the archaeological finds of *kārṣāpāṇa* and its subdivisions. Debasement of gold by means of metallic alloys is known in early Pali literature (upakkilesā, An. III. 16 ; Sn. V. 92). The Arthaśāstra permits an alloy of 1/4 in copper and of 5/16 in silver with four parts of copper and one part of *tikṣṇa*, *trapu*, *sisa* and *añjana*. By assaying 113 extant silver coins Cunningham detected an alloy varying from 13·8 to 24·8 per cent. Other methods of debasement were the plating of copper pieces with molten silver practised from as early as 500 B.C.<sup>1</sup> and addition of molten copper to a depreciated silver coin.<sup>2</sup>

### *The rūpasūtra*

The early Indian name of coin is *rūpa* or *rūpya*, apparently derived from the image or impression it carried. The *rūpasūtra* is the science of coinage and currency. In his note on *rūpasutta* (Mv. I. 49. 2), Buddhaghosa says that the learner must turn over and over many *kārṣāpāṇas*. Evidently it was an applied science and much of the knowledge was derived empirically. The shroffs who by

1 J. A. S. B., 1890, p. 182

2 J. B. O. R. S., 1919, pp. 16 f. See also Bhandarkar : *op. cit.*, pp. 164 f.

observing the stamp marks could at once tell from which place any particular coin came (Visuddhimagga) were versed in the lore. So were the *rūpadarśaka* of the Arthaśāstra and the *rūpatarka* of Patañjali entrusted with the inspection of coins. The science treated of (1) the metallic composition of coins, (2) their shape and technique, (3) their devices and places of manufacture and circulation, (4) the mint, (5) the offices connected with manufacture of coins and regulation of currency, (6) detection of counterfeit coins, (7) and above all making a revenue by inflation and sophistication. The scope and importance of the subject makes it conceivable how it is worthy of serious study not only for a tradesman but also for a prince for purposes of administration.<sup>1</sup>

1 D. R. Bhandarkar; *op. cit.*, p. 166.



**BOOK V**  
**OCCUPATION AND EMPLOYMENT**

Yathā nu kho imāni bhante puthu-sippāyatanāni-seyyathidaṃ hatthāroha assāroha rathikā dhanuggahā celakā calakā piṇḍa-dāvikā uggā rājaputtā pakkhandino mahānāgā sūrā cammayodhino dāsakaputtā ālarikā kappakā nahāpakā sudā mālākārā rajakā pesakārā nalakārā kumbhakārā gaṇakā muddikā yāni vā pan' aññāni pi evaṃ gatāni puthu-sippāyatanāni—te diṭṭh'eva dhamme sandiṭṭhikaṃ sippa-phalaṃ upajivanti, te tena attānaṃ sukhenti piṇenti mātāpitāro sukhenti piṇenti puttadāraṃ sukhenti piṇenti mittāmacce sukhenti piṇenti samaṇabrāhmaṇesu uddhaggikaṃ dakkhiṇaṃ paṭiṭṭhāpenti sovaḍḍhikaṃ sukhaṇṇikaṃ saḍḍa-saṃvattanikaṃ.

Sāmaññaphala Sutta, Dīgha nikāya.

There are Sir, a number of ordinary crafts:—elephant-drivers, horsemen, charioteers, archers, standard-bearers, camp marshalls, camp followers, high military officers of royal birth, military scouts, men brave as elephants, champions, heroes, warriors in buckskin, home-born slaves, cooks, barbers, bath-attendants, confectioners, garland-makers, washermen, weavers, basketmakers, potters, arithmeticians, accountants, and whatsoever others of like kind there may be. All these enjoy, in this very world, the visible fruits of their craft. They maintain themselves and their parents and children and friends in happiness and comfort. They keep up gifts, the object of which is gain on high, to recluses and Brāhmaṇas,—gifts that lead to rebirth in heaven, that redound to happiness, and have bliss as their result.

## CHAPTER I

### SERVICES AND ROYAL ENTOURAGE

Occupations outside the *Vārttās*. King's officers—*amacca*, *rājabhogga* *rājañña*, 'seventh caste.' The senior *amaccas*,—*senāpati*, *purohita*, *mahā-setṭhi*, *gandhabba*. The second grade,—*uparāja*, *rajjuka*, *vohārika*, *bhaṇḍāgārika*. The *adhyakṣas*,—of elephants, of horses, of cows ; others, animal-doctors. The *agghāpaka* or court-valuer. The *naḡaraḡuttika* or police commissioner. Spies. Clerks. Lower incumbents. The bather and shampooer. Specialists. Artists and technicians.

Bureaucracy of the *Arthaśāstra*. The grades. Military and espionage service. Benefits. Payment by cash and by assignment of revenue.

The four familiar *vārttās* did not comprise all the occupations of the people. Men had to seek their livelihood beyond the old *Sāstric* horizon of agriculture, cattle-rearing, trade (including industries) and usury. The palace and the administration developed a crop of offices and servants. A number of independent professions crystallised to meet the complex demands of urban life. Civilisation also produced its scums and dregs, the outlaws and the underworld of society. In a speech to *Ajātasattu Makkali* *Gosāla* refers to as many as 4,900 kinds of occupation (*ājiva*) (Dn. II. 21).

#### *King's officers*

The services in the palace and under the state provided a large number of people. The highest officers in government service were the *amaccas* who were generally,

though not always recruited from the same family, often the son succeeding the father (*amaccakula*. II. 98, 125). "The *amaccas* form a class by themselves which is generally hereditary, and in consequence of this hereditary character, to which probably, as in the case of the *Khattiyas*, a specially developed class-consciousness is joined, possesses a certain though distant resemblance with a caste."<sup>1</sup> The *rājabhogga*, people in king's pay and service, similarly represent a class wider than the *amacca*, inasmuch as they include also the lower officers. They are mentioned as a class along with *Khattiyas*, *Brāhmaṇas* and *Gahapatis* in the *Vinaya* (*Pātimokkha*, *Nisaggiya* 10) and appear to be synonymous with the *rājāṇṇa* (*Aśsalāyana Sutta*). In the light of the Pali evidence, Megasthenes is supported while stating the high civil servants as a caste. "The seventh caste consists of the councillors and assessors of the king. To them belong the offices of state, the tribunals of justice and the general administration of public affairs" (*Str.* XV. i. 49).

#### *The amaccas : senior officers*

Since administrative arrangements were not uniform in every country and in every age, titles and functions of officers differ. Some of these were common almost everywhere, others were peculiar to a particular state. In the *Jātakas* the number of *amaccas* is given at the conventional figure of 80,000 with a *senāpati* or commander-in-chief of king's forces at the top (*senāpatipamukhāni*

1. Fick : *Die Sociale Gliederung*.

asiti-amacca-sahassāni, V. 178). He also discharges peacetime functions like administration of justice (II. 186; Com. on the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta) and participates in legislation (V. 115). Not a lesser personality was the *purohita* who performs sacrifices (I. 334 ff.; III. 43 ff.; Ait. Br. VIII. 24), explains omens and trains up the heir-apparent (V. 127), a fatherly friend and adviser. He is very often seen in sole mastery of all affairs,—temporal and religious (atthadh-ammānusāsake, Jāt. II. 105, 125, 173; III. 21, 115, etc.). Along with the *purohita*, the *mahāseṭṭhi* and the *gandhabba* are seniormost officers (issarā, I. 413). The former represented the industrial guilds to the court and assisted the king in framing his industrial and commercial policy.<sup>1</sup> The *gandhabba* was the chief musician (III. 91). It is unlikely that he was accorded a rank equal to the chaplain and finance minister except with kings having a marked musical taste as for example, Samudragupta or Akbar.

#### *The lesser amaccas*

Probably just below the topmost rung was the *uparāja* or governor in a province or district (II. 367). He did not always represent a king; sometimes he was deputed by a republican government as in the case of the Sakiyas and the Koliyas (V. 412 f.). In the Maurya empire, princes of royal family were selected as viceroys of its five provinces and the practice may have been borrowed from earlier times.

The *rajjugahaka amacca* (II. 367) or *rajjuka* was the survey and settlement officer. In the Arthaśāstra the survey

<sup>1</sup> For discussion of his functions see *supra*, pp. 262 f.

tax is called *rajju* and in the Jātakas the officer appears with the rope for measuring lands. Bühler identifies him with the *rajuka* in Asoka's inscription on whom Hultzsch observes: "The Rajuka originally 'held the rope' in order to measure the fields of the ryots and to assess the land tax. Thus the word became the designation of a revenue settlement officer, just as in British India the chief administrative officer of a district is still called 'collector' because his special duty is the collection of revenue."<sup>1</sup> Much earlier than the times of Asoka and of the composition of the Jātakas the original surveyor had become the 'driver of the chariot of state.' The *rajjugāhaka amacca* is holder of the reins of government and of the rope of survey. The *rajjukas* or *rājukas* are probably the *agronomoi* of Megasthenes, the country magistrates who "superintend the rivers, measure the land as is done in Egypt and inspect the sluices, by which water is let out from the main channels into their branches" and who "collect the taxes" (Str. XV. i. 50). In the Arthaśāstra, the settlement and revenue officer is the *samahartṛ*.

The *vinicchayāmacca* (Jāt. II. 181, 301) or the *vohārika mahamatta* (Mv. I. 40. 3; Cv. VI. 4. 9) is the chief justice and law officer. He tries civil suits and settles points of law when asked to give opinion (Jāt II. 367, 380). In the Arthaśāstra, the judicial officer is the *vyavahārika*.

The head of the treasury is the *bhaṇḍāgārika* and with him went the judgeship of all the merchant guilds *sabbasenīnaṃ vicāraṇārahaṃ bhaṇḍāgarikatṭhānaṃ nāma*

adāsi).<sup>1</sup> This is marked as an innovation. "Before that no such office had existed, but there was this office ever after" (IV. 43). Elsewhere this officer figures next in rank to the *senāpati* and higher than *seṭṭhi*. The treasurer or keeper of king's purse is sometimes known also as *heraṇṇika* (III. 193).

### *The adhyakṣas*

There is an inspector of king's jewels (*maṇipabhaṃsanaṃ kammam karonto*, VI. 383) parallel to the *suvarṇadhyakṣa* of the *Arthaśāstra*. His function was the testing of jewels for the palace.

Quite respectable but presumably below this second rank, were the *adhyakṣas* or departmental heads of whom the *Arthaśāstra* enumerates twenty-one. They are not, however, excluded from the purview of the Epics. The *adhyakṣas* of elephants and of horses released their animals from the stables when the *Vānaras* set fire to the city of *Laṅkā* (*Rām.* VI. 75. 27). Nala was appointed superintendent of stables to king *Ṛtuparna* at the pay of 10,000 (*Mbh.* III. 67. 6).

The *adhyakṣas* presuppose an advanced and complicated administration which is unknown to the mass of *Jātaka* stories. But so far at least as the elephants and horses are concerned, they give the social and administrative setting in which such offices might develop. They betray a consciousness no less than the *Arthaśāstra*

<sup>1</sup> Fick renders "worthy of the regard of all guilds."

of the utility of these two animals in the service and protection of the state. The *hatthidamaka*, the *assadamaka* and *godamaka* are the trainers of the three animals respectively (1.505), and the *assagopaka* (II. 301) is the keeper of horses. A short but interesting description is given of how the *hatthidamaka* trains this animal in the arts of war ( Mn. 125 ) and fights king's battles with it ( Jāt. II. 413 ). Arts of catching wild elephants by means of tame ones are also briefly noticed ( Mn. 125 ) which are so elaborately described by Megasthenes and fully known in the Rāmāyaṇa.<sup>1</sup> The sons of these trainers, by dint of specialised knowledge, succeeded to their father's post ( Jāt. II. 94, 98, 221 ; Dn. IX. 32 ). Elephant-lore ( *hatthisuttam* ) and horselore ( *assasuttam* ) were cultivated as separate branches of learning ( Jāt. II. 46 ), and specialists in this knowledge bear the honorifics of *hattācariya* and *assācariya* ( I. 413, 444 ; II. 20, 98 ). Even the elephant-doctors ( *hatthivejja* ) were in king's service, foreshadowing the lengthy dissertations of Megasthenes and Aelian on the diseases of these animals and the specific and treatment adopted by experts.

The *agghāpaka* or court-valuer assessed the price of goods ordered for the palace.<sup>2</sup> The *nagaraguttika* or town warden was charged with the arrest and execution of outlaws ( III. 59, IV. 289 ). On receiving a complaint

1 Some elephants strolling in a lotus park saw some men riding on elephants lasso in hand and said "we are less afraid of fire, lasso or other weapons than of these selfish kinsfolk who show the way to trap us to the elephant-tamers" ( VI. 16. 6-8 ).

2 See *supra*.

from townsfolk, a king orders him to post patrolls at intervals and have the burgler caught (*nagaraguttikam ānāpetā tattha tattha gumbaṃ ṭhapetvā*...III. 436). He was like the Police Commissioner of the modern city. "Judging from the insecurity which on account of frequent mention of robbers and thieves in the Jātakas and other folk-literature must have existed in Indian cities in ancient times, he was no small personage."<sup>1</sup>

### Spies

The police officer of the Jātakas was not assisted by spies. The Jātakas have no department of officers corresponding to the elaborate espionage system of the Arthaśāstra or of the Mauryas,—“the sixth caste,” in which “the best and most trustworthy men are appointed” and to whom “is entrusted all that goes on, and of making reports privately to the king” (Str. XV. i. 48).

### Clerks

Less commonly than now, but not unoften the educated young bourgeoisie settled down in clerical jobs of the secretariat. A *kulaputta* makes his living by being a clerk of the signet (*muddāya*), clerk of account (*gaṇanāya*) or computer (*saṃkhāyena*)<sup>2</sup> (Mn. 13 ; Dn II. 14)

Fick : *Op. cit.*, p. 103.

In the Arthaśāstra, the *saṃkhyāyaka* is among the village officers who may be remunerated with land without power of alienation (II. 1). Cultivation of statistics and numerical methods (*saṃkhā*, VII. 59) developed primarily from the need of a crop forecast for assessment purposes.

or he may be the king's scribe (rājālipikāra, lekhaka, Sanchi Ins. ; Nasik C.I., 16. vii ; 26, viii ; Arth. II. 10). Hence also *mudda*, *ghaṇanā* and *lekhā* are among the esteemed arts (ukkaṭṭham nāme sippaṃ) in contrast to the lower ones of basket-maker, potter, weaver, cobbler and barber (Suttavibhaṅga, Pācittiya, II. 2. 1).

### *The lower employees*

Below these was a lot of petty officials and mediocrities, viz., the *bandhanāgārika* or the gaoler who figures in an unenviable company of people given to tormenting others (Mn. 51, 60 ; An. II. 207 ; III. 382), the *doṇamāpaka* or corn-measurer, i.e., a tax-collector under the *rajjukā* and presumably the same as the *balipatiggāhaka* and the *niggahaka* who appear as blackguards of royal extortion<sup>1</sup> ; the *sārathi* or driver of king's chariot (Jāt. II. 265, 367) ; the *dovārika* or the door-keeper (II. 241, 367 ; Mil. 234, 240, 264 ; Mn. 56) among whom were door-keepers of the palace and gate-keepers of the city. A palace *dovārika* appears in the unfortunate role of being thrashed with blows by a whimsical king every time he went in and out. The city *dovārikas* were four, one at each gate (Jāt. IV. 289) who watched the gates and closed them at night in a particular hour after shouting thrice to warn those who inadvertently kept out (II. 379). The *dauvārika* who figures in the highest rank of officialdom in the Arthaśāstra must have been some other functionary.

The various petty officials of the civil and military staff cannot be exhausted by enumeration. We have the

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1. See *supra*.

*chattaggāha* (parasol-bearer) and the *asiggāha* (sword-bearer), personally attending to the king (Jāt. VI 194). Among people who gain their livelihood in dependence on the king (*vañño khattiyassa muddhavasitass...rājūpajivine jane*) are the *anikattha* (bodyguard), *pārisajja* (courtiers), *bhaḷa* (soldiers), *balattha* (royal messengers), etc. (Mil. 234, 240, 264). The list may be extended from "the people who enjoy the visible fruits of craft in this world" viz., the *hatthāroha* (elephantman), *assāroha* (horseman), *rathika* (chariotman), *dhanuggaha* (archer), *chelaka* (standard-bearer), *calaka* (camp marshall), *piṇḍa-dāvika* (camp-follower), *cammayodhina* (warrior in buckskin), etc. (Dn. II. 14). Among menials further below are *ālāraka* (cook), *nahāpaka* (bathman), *sudā* (confectioner), *mālākāra* (garland-maker) and *rajaka* (washerman) (*Ibid*).<sup>1</sup>

Toilet, coiffure and shampooing were very common luxuries and hence the barber (*sīsapasādhana-kappako*, Jāt. II. 190 ff.) and the bathman (*nahāpaka*) had a good demand for their services (I. 342). The bathman's art is thus drawn in a parable: "Just as a skilful bathman or his apprentice (*nahāpako vā nahāpakantevāsi vā*) will scatter perfumed soap-powder (*nahāniya cunnāni ākittvā*) in a metal basin, and then besprinkling it with water drop by drop, will so knead it together that the ball of lather taking up the unctuous moisture, is drenched with it, pervaded by it, permeated by it within and without, and there is no leakage possible..." (Dn. II. 76). The process of bathing includes shampooing, rubbing oil, bathing with a fine powder and then costly garland, unguents and garments (XXIII. 9; cf. XVII. i. 23; Mn. 124; Rām. II. 65. 8; 83. 14).

1. The renderings are Rhys David's.

*Specialists*

Sometimes services of specialists were necessary for assisting the military or the police. And they had to be offered a high status and handsome remuneration. Archers (*dhanuggaha*) capable of exhibition performance are given wages of 100,000 a year (II. 87) and 1,000 *kahāpaṇas* daily (V. 128)—inequitously high, so as to make the old archers jealous. 1,000 pieces a fortnight was however reasonable at which rate another is taken into royal service and deputed to kill wild animals affecting travellers and to fight battles (I. 357). So a youth skilled in tracking footsteps is appointed by a king at the daily wage of 1,000 pieces (IV. 43).

*Artists & technicians*

A good number of artists and artisans were maintained in the palace for beautification, entertainment and more useful works e.g., the *uyyānapāla* (II. 345) or *āramika* (III 365) or park-keeper who was well posted in the art of gardening and sometimes conceived and worked out royal parks (Ram. VII. 52. 7); the dancers, the musicians, the actors, the bards, the astrologers, the sooth-sayers, etc., who were maintained with regular allowances in every court. The king had skilled artisans of all varieties for construction of forts, ships, armaments, etc., and for the working of mines, fisheries and other royal industries. The Jātaka commentary says that the king keeps artisans (e.g., *vaddhaki*) to make instruments necessary for the exercise of *viriya* or for good and bad acts (V. 242). Nārada exhorts Yudhiṣṭhira to give artisans under his employ raw materials and wages with strict regularity.

dravyopakaraṇaṃ kiñcit sarvadā satvaśilpināṃ

atthamāsaṃsāraṃ samuṣaṇṇaṃ viyataṃ samprayaçchasi

Mbh. II. 5. 118.

*The services of the Arthśāstra*

The bureaucracy conceived in the Arthśāstra is much more elaborate and complex than the small officialdom of the Pali canon. It gives a hierarchical structure with precise classification of officials in order of their salary and rank (V. 3).

The *ṛtvik* (sacrificial priest), the *ācārya* (teacher), the *mantri* (chief minister), the *purohita* (chaplain) and the *senāpati* (commander-in-chief) are accorded equality with the *yuvarāja* (heir-apparent), the *mātṛ* (queen mother), and the *rājamaheśī* (chief queen) in the civil list each drawing 48,000 *paṇas* per annum.

The *dauvārika* (?), the *antarvamsika* (superintendent of harem), the *praśāstrī* (commander), the *saṁaharī* (collector-general) and the *sannidhātṛ* (chamberlain) are each to draw 24,000.

The *nāyaka* (chief constable), the *paura* (city officer), the *vyavahārika* (judge), the *karmāntika* (superintendent of manufactories), the *mantripariṣad* (members of ministerial council), the *rāṣṭrāntapāla* (superintendents of countryparts and of boundaries) along with a prince (*kumāra*) and a prince's mother (*kumāramātṛ*),—12,000.

These high scales of salary are fixed with a view to provide against temptation and discontent. "With this they will be loyal and powerful supporters of the king's cause,"—*svāmiparibandha-balasahāyā hyetāvatā bhavanti*.

*Sreṇīmukhyāḥ* (army chiefs) and chiefs of elephants, horses, chariots and infantry and the *pradeśārāḥ* (commissioners) get 8,000 each. This is fixed with an eye to allowing them a good following in their sphere (*svavargānukarṣiṇo*).

The *adhyakṣas* of infantry, cavalry, chariotry and elephantry and keepers of timber and elephant forests (*dravya-hasti-vanapālāḥ*)—4,000.

The chariot-driver (*rathika*), the army-physician (*anīka-cikitsaka*), the horse-trainer (*assadamaka*), the carpenter (*vardhaki*), the animal-keepers (*yoṇipoṣakāḥ*)—2,000.

The *kartāntika* (foreteller), the *naimittaka* (reader of omens), the *mauhūritika* (teller of good or bad times), the *paurāṇika* (annalist), the *sūta* (story-teller), the *māgadha* (bard), the *purohita-puruṣāḥ* (retinue of the priest) and *sarvādhyakṣaḥ* (departmental superintendents)—1,000.

Trained soldiers (*śilpavantaḥ pādātāḥ*), staff of computers and scribes (*saṃkhyāyaka lekha-kādivargāḥ*), and village officer (*grāma-bhṛta*)—500; trumpet-blowers (*tūryakāra*)—300; actors (*kuśīlava*)—150; skilled artisans (*kāruṣilpināḥ*)—120.

Servants in charge of quadrupeds and bipeds (*catuspada-dvipada-paticāraka*), miscellaneous workmen (*pārikarmika*), attendants upon royal person (*upasthāyika*), bodyguards (*pālaka*), procurers of forced labour (*viṣṭivandhaka*)—60.

King's playmate (*āryayukta*), elephant-driver (*ārohaka*), sorcerer (*mānavaka*), miner in mountains (*śailakhanaka*), all kinds of attendants (*sarvopasthāyinad*), teacher (*ācāriya*) scholars (*vidyāvantaḥ*) shall have honoraria (*piyāvetana*) ranging from 500 to 1,000 according to merit.

A messenger (*dūta*) of middle quality shall get 10 *paṇas* for each *yotana* he travels, twice as much when he travels from 10 to 100 *yojanas*. For spies, schedules vary from 250 to 1,000.

The above list excludes the *gopas* or census officers and *sthanikas* or revenue officers under the *samahartṛ*. Their work is inspected by the *pradestṛs* or commissioners deputed by

the *saṃaharṭṛ* (II. 35). The *nāgaraka* looks after the affairs of the capital (II. 36).

### *Espionage service*

The huge espionage system in the Arthaśāstra's conception of state with its wide ramifications over the whole body-politic is a sad commentary on the moral of the bureaucracy. The higher officers are constantly to be watched with spies lest they stray into sedition and disloyalty, and for the dirty job are exploited the lower servants of the household—the *suḍa* (sauce-maker), *arālika* (cook), *snāpaka* (bather), *saṃvāhaka* (shampooer) *asṭaraka* (spreader of bed), *kalpaka* (barber), *prasadhaka* (toilet-maker), *udakaparicaraka* (water-carrier), and *rasada* (juice-maker) (I. 12).

Superintendents of 100 or 1,000 *vargas* (groups of staff) shall regulate the subsistence, wages, profit, appointment and transfer (*bhaktavetanālābham adeśam vikṣepaṃ ca kuryuḥ*). Officers employed to guard royal buildings, forts and countrysides will never be transferred.

### *Benefits*

The officials of the Arthaśāstra enjoy the benefits of gratuity, bonus and insurance against sickness. "Sons and wives of those who die in service shall get subsistence and wages. Infants, aged persons or diseased servants shall also be shown favour. During funeral, sickness or child-birth, the king shall give presentation to the servants concerned."

*Karmasu mṛtānām putradārā bhaktavetanam labheran. Bālavṛddhavyādhiścaṣṭam anugrāhyāḥ. Pretavyādhitasūtīkākṛṣṇa caṣṭamarthamānakarma kuryāt—V. 3.*

*Payments*

The Arthaśāstra lays down a very healthy maxim with regard to the payment of the officers from the point of view of the state. Although the *adhyakṣa* the *samkhyayaka* the *gopa* and the *sthanika* are among the village officials who may be remunerated with land without power of alienation (II. 1), later in the Book, the author is more cautious. "When short of funds, the king may pay with forest produce, cattle or fields along with a small amount of money (*hiraṇyam*). If he wants to colonise waste land he shall pay in money alone (*śūnyaṃ vā niveśayitum abhyutthito hiraṇyameva dadyāt*). But if he wants to regulate the affairs of all villages equally, then no villages will be given (*na grāmaṃ grāmasajātavyavahāra-sthāpanārtham*, V. 3). The economist-statesman no doubt profited by the experience of earlier days. The baneful practice common in the Jātakas, of paying the high officers of state like the *purohita*, the *senapati*, etc., with grants of land or revenues from villages, was telling upon its authority and financial security. The effect was no doubt hardly different from the reaction of the Jaagir system on the great Mughal Empire.

## CHAPTER II

### INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONS

Teaching profession—Centres of learning. Applied education. Fees.

Artistic professions.—Singer and music-player. Actor, troupes. Bards mimes, etc. Stigmatisation.

Occult professions.—Astrologer, Soothsayer. Palmist, etc.

Miscellaneous.

#### *Teaching profession*

Besides the services there were independent professions in which people lived by purveying their skill or knowledge for a fee. Among these the teaching profession was the most respectable though not the most paying. Unlike most others it was a settled profession localised, as in the case of the arts and crafts, in particular cities. Benares was such a centre of learning (Jāt. I. 463). A northern Brāhmaṇa, after learning all the arts becomes a teacher of world-wide fame at Benares and teaches 500 pupils (Bodhisatto udiccabrāhmaṇakule nibbattitvā vayappatto sabbasippe pāraṃ gantvā Bārāṇasiyaṃ disāpāmokkha ācariyo hutvā pañcasate mānase sippaṃ vācesī, I. 436). Sometimes the professor repaired to the forest for the isolation and seclusion it gave to academic pursuits. A world-famed teacher (disāpāmokkho ācariyo) of Benares teaching sippas to 500 pupils goes into the forest to avoid hindrances to religious life and to the

studies of his pupils and he is supplied free by people of adjoining locality with rice, milch cow and other gifts (III. 537). The passage represents ancient Indian education with its best ideals and most realistic setting. Religious and academic life were inseparable and the teacher in his own person set up the standard of character and proficiency. The sacred and solemn pursuit of learning was carried on in his sylvan nook, at safe distance from the humdrum of the town; and the people made it their duty to feed and subsidise the institution submitting for the purpose to a voluntary education cess.

Education at teacher's house was prone to generate a narrowness and obscurantism among the students. To obviate this and to supplement the theoretical training received, students on their way back after completion of the course travelled through *gamas* and *nigamas* to gain first-hand knowledge of the applied arts of different times and local customs (*sabbasamayasiṣṣaṇ ca, sikkhissāma desacaritaṇ ca jānissāma*, III. 238; IV. 39; V. 247, 426).

The collegiate course in Manu ranges from 9 or less to 36 years. The number of pupils in the *Jātakas* is conventionally given as 500 with each preceptor. Free education and board were sometimes provided for penniless lads by the people of a town (I. 239). Much more reputed than Benares as a university town was Taxila. Prodigies like Pāṇini, the grammarian, Kauṭilya, the economist-politician and Jīvaka, the physician, it claimed among its alumni. In the *Jātakas*, Takḥhasilā is a great centre of learning with reputed teachers where pupils went from Benares (I. 317, 356, 510).

The Brāhmaṇic ideal was not to accept any money fee from students (Mbh. I. 64. 20; XIII. 23. 73, 135.

14; XIV. 56. 22; Manu, III. 156, XI. 63; cf. Jāt. I. 340) Gifts in kind are however permitted (Mānu, II. 245f) besides personal service. The teacher might claim as fee of his pupil his thumb (Mbh. I. 134) or his (teacher's) enemy to be brought captive to him (I. 140). In the Pali works teachers are almost invariably paid in cash with a honorarium conventionally given at 1,000 pieces for a whole course (Jāt. I. 285.; II. 47, 278; IV. 38; V. 128; Mil. 10). A pupil who pays his teacher 7 *nikkhas* (of gold) procured by begging after the course is finished, thinks the sum inadequate and strains further to procure more (IV. 224). Of course personal attendance was the alternative to money fee. But it is given with *naivete'* characteristic of the Jātakas that the givers of *ācāriyabhaga* were 'treated like the eldest son' and taught with great care while the *dharmantevasikas* were neglected and worked hard (II. 278). Teachers were not always considerate to their pupils (*duḥkhābhijñō hi gurukulavāsasya śiṣyān parikleśena yojayitum neyeṣa*, Mbh. 1. 3. 81) and many failed the lofty ideal of sacrifice and renunciation propounded in the Smṛtis.

### *Artistic professions*

The musical and artistic professions reflect widely separated social scales. A master singer might rise to the highest position in the court along with a Chaplain and the General. Generally he let himself for hire to the public. Guttīla who was born in a musician's family (*gandhabbakule*) and took up the trade (*gandhabbasippa*, II. 248), plays his instrument for a fee and thus makes his living (*mayam. . . . gandhabbā nāma sippaṃ nissāya*

jīvāma, mūlam labhantā vādeyyāma, 254). Mūsila, the musician tries to entertain some traders on journey for hire but failing with his lyre (vīṇā) returns the money (II. 248). Another *gandhabba* hired by some sailors for free passage sings with his lyre (vīṇā, III. 188). Generally he gave his performances at public shows like the drummer (*bherivāda*, I. 283) and the conch-blower (*saṃkhadhāmana*, I. 284; Dn. XXIII. 19) who made money with their instruments at the public fairs and festivals.

Musicians, like actors, were sometimes travelling troupes staging their exhibitions jointly. Vṛhaspati lays down that the chief musician who beats time (*tālajñā*) should get  $1\frac{1}{2}$  share of the rest of the company (XIV. 30). Companies of actors (*nartaka*) are also noticed in this code. Such a company of *naṭas* was engaged by the courtesan Sāmā with 1,000 pieces to sing among crowds. "There is no place that you do not visit. Go then to every village, town and city and gathering a crowd around you first of all sing this song in the midst of the people."

tumhākaṃ agamanaṭṭhanaṃ nāma n'atthi, tumhe gāmanigamarājadhāniyo gantvā samajjaṃ katvā samajjam-aṇḍale paṭhamam eva imaṃ gītaṃ giyeyya, Jāt. III. 61.

Elder Tālaputa was born in an actor's family, acquired proficiency at theatres suited to his clan (*kulanurūpesu naccatṭhānesu*) and "became well-known all over India as leader of a company of actors. With a company of 500 women and with great dramatic splendour he attended festivals in village, township and royal residence and won much fame and favour. He was giving performance at Rājagaha (*nagaravāsinaṃ samajjaṃ dassitvā*) with his usual success" (Therag. 1090ff. Com). Such a party of actors

(Śailāḷaka) lived in Mathurā in the 1st and 2nd centuries of the Christian era whose sons figure as dedicators in a Jaina inscription from that place.<sup>1</sup>

For the actor the professional name was *kuṣṭhīlaka*,—*naṭo* or *naṭako* being the more generic term inclusive of all sorts of artists—the actor, musician, dancer, acrobat and magician. The Arthaśvstra is suspicious that the actors' visits may affect the sobriety and thriftiness of the people. At night they are to stay in a particular place and avoid accepting lavish gifts of desire or causing too much loss to any one (*kṛmadvnamatimvtram ekasyv-tiptvaṃ ca varjayeyuḥ*). For dereliction, the fine is 12 *paṇas*. They may hold their performances to their liking in accordance with the procedure of their country, caste, family, profession, copulation and language (*kṛmaṃ deśajvtigotra caṇamaithunāvabhāsenā namayeyuḥ*, IV. 1).

With the actor, and the musician, the mime, the bard and the story-teller belonged to the same category. They all maintained a peripatetic living, moved in troupes or individually, gave demonstrations and shows in public gatherings and were accorded the same social status. They moved with their women (Ram. II. 83. 15) and

1 On this Bühler has the following note in the Epigraphia Indica, I. 43 :

"It is impossible to interpret Śailāḷaka otherwise than as a synonym of Śailālin which according to Pāṇini, IV. 3. 110 originally was a name of those actors who studied the sūtras of Śailālin and according to Koshas was used later to denote any actor.....It further shows that play-acting was then, as in the present day, the business of particular families—a fact which may also be inferred from the introduction to several Sanskrit dramas where the *naṭī* is sometimes called the wife of the Śūtradhāra and his brothers are mentioned as actors. In a Jaina story of the clever boy Bharata we hear even of a *aṇṭagrāma*....."

if the Sāstra injunctions are to be believed, had a very low standard of morals. Adultery is permitted to wives of *cāraṇas* (actors and singers according to the Commentary) 'for such men send their (to others) or, concealing themselves, allow them to hold criminal intercourse' (Manu, VIII. 362; Baudh. II. 2. 4. 3). No wonder the professions are condemned (Mbh. XIII. 90. 11) or assigned to the Sūdra (Arth. I. 3). The *kuśīlavas* (bards, actors jugglers, dancers, singers and so forth—Medh.) are unworthy of invitation to a *śrāddha* (Manu, 155-58); food given by the actor and musician is not acceptable (IV. 210, 214). Actors and teachers as dancing singing and acting are stigmatised as *upapātkaṃs* (Baudh. II. 1. 2. 13). Public dancers and actors are all condemned (I. 5. 10. 24; Viṣ. XXXVII. 32, LI. 13f.; Nār. III. 3; Vr. XXII. 3).

### *Occult profession*

A large mass of professionals, thrived upon the superstition and credulity of the people by the exercise of the occult arts. Even in the court which attracted the best intelligence and talents of the land the services of the *nakkhattajānoka* (astrologer) and the *nemittaka* reader of omens) are frequently requisitioned to give their studies upon problems (VI. 5). There were also interpreters of dream (*supinapāthaka*, V. 443) and of signs (*lakṣhaṇa pāthaka*, VI. 9) who give bogus readings. The practice of these pseudo-sciences is damned in the Smṛtis probably because of the superstitions and public deception they encouraged. Among the black list of disreputables are the palmist (Mbh. XIII. 90. 7), the astrologer (Manu, III. 162, Viṣ. LXXXII. 7; Nār. I. 183), the weather-

prophet (Nār. I. 183), interpreters of omens and practitioners of propitiatory rites (Vi. XXII. 3). The guises of a *kārtāntika* of a *naimittika* or of a *mauhūrtika* are helpfully taken by spies in the Arthaśāstra (IV. 4; XIII. 1).

### Miscellaneous

There were professional wrestlers (*malla* *yuddhaka*, IV. 81; *malla*, Mil. 331) who fought duels in the ring before the gallery (Jāt. VI. 276). With the *naṭa* the *jhallas* and the *mallas* ('fencers with sticks or wrestlers and jesters,'—Com.) are relegated to the lowest class (Manu, XII. 45). There were bathers who did the customer shampooing and massage with oil, then a good bath with sponge, powder and water and lastly, a nice toilet with brush, garlands, scents and dress. There were ferrymen (*nāvika*) who ferried people across a river for a fee (*vetanaṃ*) which it was foolish to ask for *after* crossing (Jāt. III. 230). A more honourable and skilful profession was archery, the expert hiring himself out for exhibition shooting or for some act of prowess (III. 219 ff; V. 128 ff; Mn. 13; An. IV. 423).

Except for the teacher, the soothsayer and occasionally a good musician or an archer, all these people ranked in the economic scale below the average. Their social position was accordingly adjusted. They performed no direct productive functions in economic society but they supplied amusements and entertainments, the much-needed tonics of laughter, humour, thrill and romance. Further below were other plebeian professions stigmatised in Buddhist and Brahmanical canon, in theoretical as well as in popular literature.

## CHAPTER III

### BAD LIVELIHOOD

Greek observers on public morality.

1. Gangster and thief · tribal bands, ransom gangs, pilferers, cattle-lifting  
Gang laws. Detection and punishment
2. Hired assassin. 3. Forger 4. Impostor. 5. Sorcerer.
6. Gambler : gambling and betting. Perils of gambler. Licensing, revenue.
7. Tavern-keeper . drinking and dissipation, liquors. Crime-centres.  
Revenue.
8. Brothel-keeper.
9. Prostitute two categories. Fees. Manners and morals. Public  
esteem. Revenue and espionage.  
The underworld and the state.

Megasthenes and the Greek memoirists in the Macedonian army observed Indians to be habitual teetotallers and conspicuous for truthfulness and honesty. "They are not litigious. Witnesses and seals are unnecessary when a man makes a deposit; he acts in trust. Their houses are usually unguarded." In Sind, says Onesicritus, no legal action could be taken except for murder and assault. "We cannot help being murdered or assaulted, whereas it is our fault if we give our confidence and are swindled. We ought to be more circumspect at the outset and not fill the city with litigation" ( Str. XV. i. 709, 702 ).

The report derived no doubt from hearsay, or from a parochial or superficial acquaintance, militates with every piece of Indian evidence, theoretical or popular. It conflicts even with the Greek ambassador's own statement

that theft from royal treasury or evasion of toll dues were punished with death. The outlaw and the underworld, anti-social institutions and foul means of livelihood ran rampant as everywhere but under sufficient cover to escape the notice of a casual observer.

### 1. *Gangster and thief*

In those days of insecurity, the robber was public enemy No. 1. An Aṅgulimāla was alone enough to scare a whole country like Magadha and a redoubtable King like Ajātasattu. A single brigand sufficed to terrorise a whole city (Jāt. III. 59). There were widely varied types in this class ranging from the pettiest pilferer or solitary dare-devil to the highly organised and well-armed gangs.

The bands of freebooters, notorious in the Jātakas, who infested the outlying forests (III. 220; An. I. 69), where civil authority was weak and thrived by plundering passing travellers and caravans, were in reality the old settlers of the land who were dispossessed but were intractable enough not to submit to the Aryan fold. These half-savage, semi-barbarous tribes—the so-called *mlecchas*, occasionally broke into the settled tracts (*paccantagāme*) of their neighbours, and from there carried off prisoner for slaves (III. 147; IV. 220).<sup>1</sup> The robbers in a robber-village go to the woods to attend to a visiting king (*coragāmakavāsino corāpi rañño ārakkhattāya araññaṃ eva pavisiṃsu*). The chieftain's wife goes about clad in leaves and branches (*sākhabhāṅgaṃ nivāsetvā carati*,—Com. IV. 430ff). They make human sacrifices to their deity (Therag. 705ff). These tribal gangs had various methods of plun-

1. The Afridis of Waziristan offer a modern parallel.

dering people. They practised highway robbery and burglary (pāṇṭhadubbanasandhicchedādīni karanto jīvikam kappesi, II. 388 ; pāṇṭhadūsakā, Mil. 290) or they perpetrated gang actions on whole villages (gāmaghātakā; Mil. 290). Sometimes they gave an ultimatum and worked out the threat if the demand was not met (pūrvakṛtāpadānam pratijñāya apaharantam, Arth. IV. 8). Sometimes they hit upon a novel device which gave them a new appellation (pesanakacora) : when they caught two prisoners interested in one another, e. g., a father and a son or a teacher and a pupil, they kept one and despatched the other to fetch a ransom (Jāt. I. 253; IV. 115).

Apart from the gangs, there were individual thieves and pilferers in the settled places, people who took to criminal activity from within the town and villages (III 436, 514 ; Mn. 13, 129. A thief after breaking into a house in a suburban village flees with his hands full of plunder (eko coro nagaradvāragāme ekasmiṃ gehe sandhiṃ chinditvā hattasāram ādāya palāyitvā.....III. 33). Cattle-lifting was a chosen line of the small pilferers as well as of the big gangs (I. 140 ; IV. 251 ; VI. 335).

The strength of the gangs is conventionally given at 500. Like the industrial arts their trade was organised in village guilds of their own (coragāma) with a ringleader as head (corajetṭhaka, I. 297 ; II. 388 ; IV. 430). They had their own trade morals ; their tribal or gang laws were held sacrosanct as the laws of all guilds and races. In a robber village, a cock is rebuked by a loyal and wise parrot for condemning the robber's trade (corakammam, IV. 430ff). The Arthasāstra lays down that transactions relating to robbery (śalaka) are valid though done at night (III. 1). Quoting Kātyāyana, Vivādatanākara says that thieves and

robbers belonging to a guild are to divide their booty in the ratio 4 : 3 : 2 : 1 according to ability and if one of the gang is arrested money spent for his release is to be shared by all.

To handle the crime of outlawry, the state and the public had one maxim, not different from that of other ancient civilisations, viz., an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. When the people caught a suspect, rather than let justice have its own course, they preferred to take it in their own hands. They "bind his hands behind his back and lead him to the place of execution courging him in every public square with whips" (pacchābādhinaṃ bandhitvā catukke catukke kasahi talentā āghāṭanamṃ nenti, III 436). Very often the culprit succumbed to this first deal of justice (III. 514). If the man managed to reach the custodians of law and order, ruthless torture was resorted to for extorting confession (I. 384) with the result that innocent people were often victimised. The legend of Maṇḍavya occurring in the Kaṇhadipayana Jātaka, in the Epics (Mbh. I 63, 92, 107) and in the Arthaśāstra (IV. 8) is a classical case. A thief escaped delivering his booty at the door of the ascetic; the latter, though innocent confessed his guilt from torture and was impaled. Yet an unscrupulous espionage system and relentless torture are enjoined in the Arthaśāstra to deal with these crimes (IV. 5, 6, 8).

After confirmation of guilt, the offender was punished by whipping, mutilation, impalement, death or other ingenious methods of torture gruesome in description (Mn. 13, 129; An. I. 46; II. 122; Sn. II. 128). The customary punishments for a *cora* are uprooting his eyes (cakkhuppātanam), impalement on a stake (sūlāropanam), and relieving

the trunk of the head (sisacchedanam); and these do not exhaust all (Mil. 166, 185, 197). He may be thrown down from a cliff (corapapāta, Jāt. IV. 191). He may have his hands, feet, nose and ears cut off and drifted down a river in a canoe (II. 117). Death, in any case, was his sure destiny even if the offence was so small as to pick up a parcel from the high road (V. 459). Some times the people took not only the first but the final deal of justice with themselves and left a cattle-lifter cutting off his hand and feet (VI. 335). Megasthenes testifies to this system of torture and death sentence in the Maurya administration and Manu falls in line with the current tradition by prescribing for the thief capital punishment (IX. 270), mutilation or impalement (276f.; Viṣ. V. 136; Nir. Intr. 34, Vṛ. XXII. 17). Only author of the Arthśāstra is enlightened enough to leave provision for fine which ranges from 12 to 96 paṇas according to the value of the articles stolen or robbed (III. 17). The pirate and the cattle-lifter along do not deserve this leniency and have to pay the highest penalty, such a nuisance they had made of themselves (II. 29).

Was there no relief against the universal application of *lex talionis*? Even in the Jātakas were not unknown better methods of criminal investigation than forcing a suspect to disgorge guilt by torture (I. 384). We have seen a tracker of footsteps in action under a king (III. 505). The Arthśāstra evinces the knowledge of various scientific processes like study of foot-prints and physical expressions, identification by the smell of body from a piece of rag left at the place of occurrence, etc. (IV. 6). Rāma's precept to Bharata was that a suspect should be convicted only when he is caught in action by the owner or by the police, or after cross-examination, although care should be taken

that he did not obtain release by bribe (Rām. II. 57). The practice of impalement of robbers on a stake is referred to in a Jātaka story as "prevalent in those days" (III.34), implying thereby that there might have been a change for the better when the story was crystallised. And enlightened statesmanship was not lacking like that of the counsellor who advised his king that against lawlessness and brigandage, taxation and punishment were not the right redress; the war has to be waged not against criminals but against the sources of crime, viz., poverty, unemployment and discontent (Dn. V. 11.).

## 2. *Hired Assassin*

Rogues might be hired for murder. Devadatta employed cut-throats (II. 416) and archers (III. 97) for the murder of Buddha. The Arthaśāstra knows such wretches (IV. 7). The hire charge for an assassination is 1,000 *kaṭapaṇas* (Jāt. V. 126).

## 3. *Forger*

The forger (*pratirūpakāraka*, Mbh. XII. 59. 49) practised his evil art with false coins, gold, pearls, gems, etc. The Arthaśāstra evinces a good knowledge of his trade. A manufacturer of counterfeit coins (*kūṭapaṇakāraka*) may be suspected for frequently purchasing various kinds of metals, alkalis, charcoal, bellows, pincers, crucible, stove and hammers, having his hands and cloth dirty with ashes and smoke or possessing such other accessory instruments.

Yam vā nānālohaṣṭkārāṇām amṡāra.bhastra-saṃdamśa-mūṣīkadhikaraṇīvitamkamūṣāṇāmabhikṣaṇam kretāraṇ mūṣī-bhasmadbhūmadigdhabahastavasulīṅgaṇ karmāropakaraṇasaṃvargaṇ kūṭarūpakārakaṇ manyeta.

He may be betrayed by a spy getting into apprenticeship under him. The culprit is to be banished. The same procedure and penalty is prescribed against the dealer of counterfeit gold who lowers its quality with alloy (*rāgasyāpahartā kūṭasuvārṇavyavahārī*). To utter a counterfeit coin into the treasury entails death sentence, and to deal with it, a fine of 1,000 *paṇas* (IV. 1, Munich MS.). According to Bṛhaspati forgers of gems, pearls or corals are to be tested by oath or ordeal (X. 1; XXII. 14).

#### 4. *Impostor*

Sharpers and swindlers (*nekatika*, *vañcanika*, Mil. 290) who lived by blackmail were not as rare, nor as easily let off, as Onesicritus would have. A typical one is the robe-tailor (*civaravaddhako*) who cheats buyers by bartering new cloth with rag-made robes which "after the dyeing was done, he would enhance in colour with a wash containing flour to make a dressing, and rub it with a shell, till he makes it quite smart and attractive" (Jat. I. 220). Manu is very elaborate on the ferreting out of and dealing with all kinds of cheats, both open and concealed (IX. 257-62). According to the Śāntiparva a sinful wight living by deceit is to be ostracised or killed at sight (109. 23).

#### 5. *Sorcerer*

The impostor appeared under special garb with his practice of black arts. A typical diviner was *Vaṅgīsa*, a Brāhmaṇa of Sāvatti who used to divine by tapping a skull where its former occupant was re-born (Therag. 1209 ff. Com.). The Arthaśāstra narrates various practices

of witchcraft and sorcery meant to blackmail the people (V. 2). There was, e.g., the *kuhaka* and *sambodhanakāraka* who can secure a woman's love with magical charms (IV. 4). Manu punishes sorcery with a fine of 200 *paṇas* (IX. 290).

#### 6. Gambler

Gambling in dice with jugglery and stakes (Jāt. VI. 280 ff.) was in high favour among all classes and it was the chief pastime in the palace (I. 289f), not excluding a pious king like Yudhiṣṭhira. Besides, there were habitual or professional gamblers (*dhutta*, *akkhadhutta*) in every city (Dn. XVII. i. 6, 29, 32 ; Mn. 87). Betting or wager over animal fights, races, etc., was another common custom. A Brāhmaṇa and a merchant bet to the tune of 1,000 pieces over the capacity of a draught bull (Jāt. I. 191f). There is a wager of 5,000 over a duel between a snake and a frog. One of the betters demands and obtains a surety (*paṭibhoga*) from his opponent (VI. 192). Aelian says that in the ox-race where an ox is yoked to a chariot between two horses, richmen and owners of oxen heavily betted and even the spectators against each other (XV. 8).

The evils of gambling and the deterioration in social status of the addict (of course when he was a small fry) are constantly harped upon by sinner counsel. According to a discourse of Buddha the addiction (*jutappamādatthānanuyoga*) is one of the six channels of dissipating wealth and is accompanied by six dangers. "As winner he (the gambler) begets hatred ; when beaten, he mourns his wealth ; his actual substance is wasted ; his word has no weight in a court of law ; he is despised by friends and officials ; he is not sought after by those who would give or take in

marriage, for they would say that a man who is a gambler cannot afford to keep a wife" (Dn. XXXI. 7, 11). The economist's sermon goes "The same wealth that is won like a piece of flesh in gambling, causes enmity. Lack of recognition of wealth properly acquired, acquisition of ill-gotten wealth, loss of wealth without enjoyment, staying away from answering the call of nature and contracting diseases from not taking timely meals are the evils of gambling." Again, "gamblers always play even at night by lamp light, and even when the mother (of one of the players) is dead; the gambler exhibits temper when spoken to in times of trouble" (Arth. VIII. 3). Gamblers and keepers of gambling dens are sources of disorder to the state (Mbh. XII. 88. 14).

To maintain law and order, to check dissipation and deterioration of public morals, state regulation of gambling was called for. The state had further motive, the primary one of drawing a good revenue and accessory purposes like detection of crime. This means that it had its own gambling houses and that it levied from players a license fee, hire charge and share of the wins; it issued license to private dens for a heavy fee and tax on the owner; and it uprooted all unlicensed gambling with a firm hand.

According to the *Mṛcchakaṭika*, gambling houses (*tentaśāla*) licensed by the state were a feature of big towns. In the *Arthaśāstra* the state itself carries on a lucrative traffic and centralises gambling through a Superintendent (*dyūtādhyakṣo dyūtam ekamukhaṃ kārayet*). The Superintendent levies 5 per cent. of stakes won, hire for supplying dice and other accessories, fee for supplying water and accommodation and license fee (*karmakraya*, II. 20). *Bṛhaspati* approves gambling and bets on prize fights

(*samāhvaya*) with animals like birds, rams, deer, etc., because they serve the purpose of discovering thieves (XXVI. 2f). "The keeper of the gambling house shall receive the stakes and pay the victorious gambler and the king; he shall also act as witness in a dispute, assisted by three other gamblers" (*ib.* 8). Nārada has the same view on these institutions and adds that the keeper shall conduct the contests, pay the stakes won and get a profit of 10 per cent. on the wins (XVII. 1f; cf. *Āpas.* II. 10. 25. 12f; *Yāj.* II. 199f). As for private-owned dens, since the king is entitled to a share, licensing is necessary (*Nār.* XVII. 7f; *Yāj.* II. 201, 203; *Śukranīti*, I. Vv. 603-608). Only Manu wants gambling (*dyūta*) and betting (*samāhvaya*) to be extinguished, root and branch, and the gambler banished from the town (IX. 221-225).

#### 7. Tavern-keeper

According to the Greeks the Indian diet was distinguished by the absence of wine which they took only in relished ceremonies; but rice beer was generally drunk (*Str.* XV. i. 709). The former part is borrowed from legal injunction or from those who observed it, the latter from a more popular practice. The drunkard (*śauṇḍa*) appears in the city side by side with the gambler (*Dn.* XVII. i. 6, 29. 32) dissipating wealth with the attendant six dangers (XXXI. 7f) and visiting the distiller or tavern-keeper (*śauṇḍikāḥ*, *Rām.* II. 83, 15; *pānāgārika*, *Jāt.* V. 13) who prepares and caters a large variety of intoxicating liquors (*sura-meraya-majja*, *Dn.* XXXI. 7). The *Arthaśāstra* enumerates a long list (II. 25). Viṣṇu knows of thirteen, viz., that distilled from sugar; *mādhvi* wine, that from flour,

*mādhuka* wine, that from molasses, from the fruits of the Tanka tree, of the jujube tree, of the datepalm, of bread-fruit tree, from wine grapes, *mādhvika* wine, *maireya* wine and the sap of cocoanut tree (XXII. 82f). According to Manu, *surā* is of three kinds—that distilled from molasses (*gauḍī*), that distilled from ground rice, that distilled from *madhuka* (*mahuā*) flowers (*Kullūka*) or from honey (*Medhātithi*) or from flower, honey and grape (*Nārāyaṇa*) (*mādhvī*, XI. 95). According to the same commentators, *vāruṇī* is a special quality of *gauḍī* and *mādhvī* (XI. 147). In popular parlance such technical distinctions were not always observed and *surā* and *vāruṇī* appear as of entirely different qualities. "A trader in spirits (*vāruṇī-vaṇijo*) having prepared fiery spirits (*tikhiṇā-vāruṇī*) and selling them, having received gold *suvaṇṇas*, etc., a number of people being gathered together (at the shop), he went in the evening to bathe bidding his apprentice (*antevāsika*) in these words: 'My man, do you, having taken the price (*mūlam*), give the spirits' (Jāt. 1.251)<sup>1</sup> This shows the popularity and dearness of *varuṇī* especially of the strong brand in comparison with the *surā* which could be bought for a copper coin (I. 350).

The tavern was not only the main attraction for the dissipation of the wealthier classes it was the breeder of crimes and the favourite haunt of criminals (V. 13). Cut-throats and thieves, after finishing their operations indulge in drinking bouts (II. 417, 427). Two tipplers drug spirits to rob the drunkards (*sāvattthiyaṇa suādhuttā sannipatitvā mantayimṣu*, I. 269). With the gambling house, the

1 See the rendering by Mrs. Rhys Davids in J. R. A. S., 1901, pp. 876f. fn, as opposed to Chalmers' in the Cambridge Edn.

brewery appears as a centre of civil disorder (Mbh. XII. 88. 14). Hence sale of liquor is among disreputable professions (295. 5f) and the seller is to be banished by the king from his town (Manu, IX. 225).

As a matter of fact such stern measures were very rarely taken. For like the gambling house, the tavern yielded profit and could be similarly used as a tool for espionage. The village lord who mourns the loss to his perquisites by the abstemious habits of his folk (Jāt. I. 199) may well have taken his cue from the state, and the other who forbids the sale of liquor in his village was a rare one in his class as exemplar of Buddhist piety (IV. 115). All the state (or its agents and parallels) did was to restrict or monopolise the traffic. In the Arthaśāstra the state itself is the biggest wine merchant. Others carrying on the trade have to obtain license and pay a heavy toll. Drinking is strictly regulated and is not allowed outside the booths which are set up at big intervals. State shops also served as auxiliary to the espionage system (II.25). According to the Śukranīti the drinking house has to obtain king's license (I. v. 604).

### *Brothel-keeper*

With the brewery, the brothel was in happy company with its brood of crimes and criminals (Mbh. XII. 88. 14). The pimp (strīvyavahārī) trading with the virtues of woman (Arth. II. 27 ; kuṇḍāśī, Mbh. XIII. 90. 7) and keeper of dancing girls (vaidehaka, raṅgastrījīvī, Mbh. XII. 37. 31) thrived eminently as parasite professions spreading crime and disease, bringing income to the state and serving as agents of the police.

*Prostitute*

The prostitute was the nadir of the underworld in whom all the vices and vicious institutions converged. She might belong to different scales according as she was the *nagarasobhanā* or *gaṇikā* or as she was a *vaṇṇadāsi* (Jāt. II. 367ff). The former was the chief courtesan, literally 'the beauty of the town,' surrounded by a retinue of harlots in her establishment (*Sulasā nāma nagarasobhani' pañcasata-vaṇṇadāsi parivārā ahoṣi*, III. 435). The courtesan Kali had a similar retinue (IV. 248). Ambapālikā of Vesālī and Sālavatī of Rājagaha belonged to this rank (Mv. VIII. 1-3). The 500 *vaṇṇadāsīs* and the 16,000 dancing girls (*solasaḥassa nāṭakittiyo*) in the king's suite (III. 365 ; V. 190, 486) were of the same plebeian category. The Arthaśāstra classifies *gaṇikās* into those attached to royal court and public prostitutes (II. 27).

The customary fee for the chief courtesan of the town is 1, 000 *kahāpaṇas* for a visit or a night (III. 59, 435, 475 ; IV. 248). The Arthaśāstra fixes 1, 000 *paṇas* as the salary of the chief courtesan in king's service, probably per mensem. But this is only a conventional sum. Ambapālikā charges 50 for one night and Sālavatī 100 (Mv. VIII. 1, 3), we do not know whether in silver, gold or copper pieces. At the bottom of the scale, the lowest fee was a piece of betel (*tāmbulamattam*, II. 309; 379).

Further glimpse is obtained from the Jātakas, into the customs, manners and morals of the ill-famous houses. The fashion in the quarter of Kali was that out of the 1,000 pieces received, 500 were for the women, 500 the hire charge of clothes, perfumes and garlands. The visitors received and put on garments for the night, the next day donned their own and went away.

Tasmim̐ pana ganṇikāghare idaṃ cārittaṃ : ābhattaṃ sahaṣṣato, pañca satāni gaṇikāya honti, pañca satāni vatthagandhamālāmūlam honti, āgatapurisā tasmim̐ ghare laddhavatthāni nivāsetvā rattim̐ vasitvā punadivase gacchantā nivāservā ābhatavatthān'eva nivāsetvā gacchanti. IV. 249.

Another is very strict about her fees. A merchant's son spends on her 80 crores of money, yet one day when he comes empty-handed he is cast out by the neck (III. 475). On the other hand the prostitute had her own codes of professional morality. Her code of honour dictates that after receiving contract from a suitor, she must not go with another for any offer. A prostitute, true to this standard, is an example of Kuru piety and enunciates this in accordance with the ethics of her profession (II, 379). Another had fallen from better days because the lesson was lost upon her. "She used formerly to take a price from the hand of one not to go with another until she had made him enjoy his money's worth, and that is how she used to receive much. Now she has changed her manner and without leave of the first she goes with the last, so that she receives nothing, and none seeks after her. If she keeps to her old custom, it will be as it was before."

Sā gaṇikā pubbe ekassa hatthato bhattim̐ gahetvā taṃ ajirāpetvā aññassa hatthato na gaṇhāti, ten' assā pubbe bahum̐ upajjidāni pana attano dhammataṃ visajjetvā ekassa hatthato gahitaṃ ajirāpetvā va aññassa hatthato gaṇhāti, purimassa okāsaṃ akatvā pacchimassa karoti, ten' assā bhatti na uppajjati, na keci naṃ upasaṃkamanti, sace attano dhamme ṭhassati pubbe sadisā va bhavissati, II. 309.

In certain passages, a prostitute's profession appears as the meanest of vocations. One of the class wails : ahaṃ hi nagare Pāṭaliputte gaṇikā rūpūpajivim̐ antimajīvikā (Mil.

122). Sāmā knows that inspite of her rate of 1,000 she is hated for her vile trade (nīcakammaṃ, Jēt. III. 60). But these instances give a partial view of the social psychology. The reputation of Videha was as much in its 16,000 girls as in its 16,000 villages and storehouses (III. 364 ; V. 190). The chief courtesan was the pride of the city, the focus of its aesthetics, as Sulasā was of Bālānāsi, Ambapālikā was of Vesālī and Sālavati was of Rājagaha.

"There was also the courtesan Ambapālikā who was beautiful, graceful, pleasant, gifted with the highest beauty of complexion, well-versed in dancing, singing and lute-playing, much visited by desirous people. She asked 50 for one night. Through her Vesālī became more and more flourishing."

Ambapālikā gaṇikā abhirūpā hoti dassaniyā pāsādikā paramāya vaṇṇapokkharatāya samannāgatā padakkhimā nacce ca gīte ca vādite ca abhisatā atthikānaṃ manussānaṃ paññāsāya ca rattim gacchati tāya ca vesālībhiyyosomattāya uposobhati. Mv. VIII. 1.

Finding Rājagaha outdone by Vesālī Seniya Bimbisāra installed a beautiful and accomplished girl Sālavati as courtesan, through whom Rājagaha gradually flourished. She charged 100 for one night (ib, 3). The chief courtesan of the state according to the Arthaśāstra, is selected with sole consideration to beauty and accomplishments and she is trained up to all the artistic and musical proficiencies (II.37).<sup>1</sup>

Of course the state was interested in the traffic. It had use both for the glamorous nymph and for the street

1 The *gaṇikā* of the Arthaśāstra and the Kāmasūtra resembles very much the Japanese Geisha the cultured society girl trained in the arts of entertainment.

girl. They attracted rich men and, with them, business and prosperity. They were employed for sundry purposes. The king of Aṅga enticed the young recluse R̥ṣyaśr̥ṅga by means of a troupe of courtesans (Rām. I. 11). They formed an important part in the ceremonials. The *gaṇikās* along with minstrels and instrument-players are to go out and receive Rāma on his return from exile (VI. 129. 3). "They shall pay every month twice the amount of a day's earning to the government." Above all they are the most effective agents of the secret police (Arth. II. 27).

Such was the vicious circle of outlaws and undesirables of society, the *gūḍhājīvīs* who are to be suppressed with fines, banishment, espionage and torture (Arth. IV. 5, 6, 8). The bandit, the cut-throat, the swindler, the gambler and the debauch were bedfellows of the underworld and their rendezvous were the tavern, the brothel and the gambling den. The oft-quoted trio—wine, women and dice—were centres of crime and civil disorder (Sut. 106 ; Rām. II. 70. 41 ; M̥bh. III. 13. 7 ; XII. 59. 60 ; 88. 14 ; 93. 17). The civil authority took little pains to wipe out these plague-spots. While crimes of violence (*sāhasa*) were dealt with a ruthless application of *lex talionis*, crimes of immorality were connived at for the sake of revenue and the vicious purposes of an unscrupulous secret service. The state had yet to learn the chaplain's maxim that crime cannot be controlled by taxation and torture and that institutions thriving upon public immorality undermine the basic fabric of the state.



**BOOK VI**  
**SOCIAL PHYSIOGNOMY**

Sa kho so, bhikkhave, bālo sace kadāci karahaci dīghassa addhuno accayena manussattam āgacchati, yāni tāni nicakulam caṇḍālakulam vā nesādakulam vā veṇakulam vā rathakārakulam vā pukkusakulam vā—tathārupe kule paccājāyati daḷidde apannapānabhojane kasiravattike, yattha kasirena ghāsacchādo labbhati. So ca hoti dubbanño duddasiko okoṭimako bāvhabādho kāṇo vā 'kuni vā khañjo vā pakkhahato vā, na lābhī annassa pānassa vatthassa yānassa mālāgandhavilepanassa seyyāvasathapadīpeyassa ; so kāyena duccharitam carati vācāya duccharitam carati manasā duccharitam carati ; so kāyena duccharitam caritvā.....kāyassa bheda param maraṇā apāyam duggatiṃ vinipātam nirayam upajjati : .....

Sa kho so, bhikkhave, paṇḍito sace kadāci karahaci dīghassa addhuno accayena manussattam āgacchati, yāni tāni uccakulāni—khattiyamahāsālakulam vā 'brahmanamahāsālakulam vā gahapatimahāsālakulam vā—tathārupe kule paccājāyati adḍhe mabaddhane mahābhoge pahutajātarūparājate pahutavittūpakaraṇe pahutadhanadhāññe ; so ca hoti abhirūpo dassaniyo pāsādiko paramāya vaṇṇapokkharatāya samannāgato, lābhī annassa pānassa vatthassa yānassa mālāgandhavilepanassa seyyāvasathapadīpeyyassa ; so kāyena sucaritam carati, vācāya sucaritam carati, manasā sucaritam carati ; so kāyena sucaritam caritvā.....kāyassa bheda param maraṇa sugatiṃ saggaṃ lokam upajjati.

—Bālapaṇḍitasutta, Majjhima-nikāya.

A fool, should he become a human being after the lapse of a very long time, comes into one of the low stocks—caṇḍālas, nesādas, veṇas, rathakāras and pukkusas, he is reborn to a life of vagrancy, want and penury, scarce getting food and drink for his stomach or clothes to his back.

He grows up ill-favoured and unsightly, misshapen, a weakling, blind or deformed, or lame or a cripple ; he gets no food, drink and clothes, nor carriage, garlands, scents and perfumes ; he misconducts himself in act, word and thought ; his misconduct brings him at the body's dissolution after death to a state of misery and woe or to purgatory.....

A wise man, should he become a human being after the lapse of a very long time, he comes into one of the high stocks,—Khattiyas, Brāhmaṇas or Gahapatis, he is reborn to a life of affluence, riches and wealth with abundance of gold and coins of silver, and with abounding substance and abounding possessions. He grows up well-favoured and well-looking, with loveliest complexion, with plenty of food and drink and clothes and carriages and garlands and scents and perfumes ; he conducts himself aright in act, word and thought and his right conduct brings him at the body's dissolution after death to well-being and satisfaction in heaven.





## CHAPTER I

### SLAVE LABOUR

Origin : Prisoner of war. Inherited. Born. Purchased. Gift. Mortgaged. Judicial punishment. Apostate. For food. Debtor. Voluntary. By wager. Growth of slavery. Manumission.

Functions : Personal attendance. Domestic service. Industrial establishments. Working for hire. Prostitution of female slaves.

Code of relation. Legal position. Social position.

Actual treatment : Chain and whip, 'Slave's fare.' Run-away slave. Freed slave.

The slave and the slave class. The Ārya slave and the Śūdra slave. Indian and Western slavery.

'Dāsa,' the Indian word for a slave is used in the Origin. Ṛgveda synonymously with 'dasyu' in the sense of enemies of the Aryans (V. 34. 6 ; VI. 22. 10 ; 33, 3 ; 60. 6 ; VII. 83. 1 ; Av. V. 11. 3). The *dāsavarṇa* (Rv. I. 101. 1 ; 130.8 ; II. 12.4 ; 20.7 ; IV. 16. 13 ; VI. 47. 21 ; VII, 5. 3) and *āryavarṇa* (III. 34. 9) allude to the aborigines and the Aryan invaders with reference to their respective complexions.<sup>1</sup> The difference in religion between the two sets of people is also very frequently noted (I. 33, 4f ; IV. 16. 9 ; V. 7. 10 ; 42. 9 ; VI. 14. 3 ; VIII. 70. 10 ; X. 22. 7f).

1 This is sometimes directly mentioned : 'Kṛṣṇa tvac,'—Rv. I. 130.8 ; IX. 41.1 ; 'svitnya,'—I. 100. 18 ; 'ahorātra' as analogous to 'śūdrāryan,' not of course in direct order—Vāj. Sam. XXIV. 30 Cf. in the Majjhima (93)—'d'eva vaṇṇā ayy c'eva dāso ca' in the Yona and Kamboja countries.

These conquered aboriginals must have often been reduced to slavery and hence the new application of the word 'dāsa' in the sense of a slave (VII. 86.7 ; VIII. 56. 3 ; X. 62. 10 ; Av. IV. 9. 8 ; Ch. Up. VII. 24. 2). In the Atharvaveda 'dāsī' is used in this sense (V. 22. 6 ; XII. 3. 13 ; 4. 9 ; Ch. Up. V. 13. 2 ; Br. Up. VI. 1. 10). "Aboriginal women no doubt were the usual slaves, for on their husbands being slain in battle they would naturally have been taken as servants."<sup>1</sup>

Thus in India, as elsewhere, slavery originated from the earliest laws of war. "The vanquished  
1. Prisoner of war.      is the victor's slave—such is the law of war" (Mbh. IV. 33.59f).<sup>2</sup> Those made captive under a standard are among the different types of slaves enumerated in Manu, the Arthaśāstra and Nārada (dhvajāhṛta, —Manu, VIII. 415 ; Arth. III. 13 ; Nār. V. 27). Prisoners captured in raids are one of the three varieties known in the Vinaya-piṭaka (karamarānito, BhikV-Saṃ. 1.2.1). In the Jātakas brigands are seen harrying a border village and going off with their prisoners (coresu paccantaḡāmaṃ paharitvā karamare gahetvā gacchantesu, III. 147 ; IV. 220). In the Mahāsutasoma Jātaka, Sutasoma is afraid that Brahmadatta of Banaras would enslave the captured princes.<sup>3</sup>

1 Macdonell and Keith : *Vedic Index*, Vol. I, p. 357.

2 In the same vein the Pāṇḍavas speak to the captive Jayadratha in the Vanaparva.

3 Among the four kinds of slaves enumerated elsewhere appear those driven by fear (bhayā paṇunnāpi. Jāt. VI, 285). Perhaps in those times and places when and where aggression and brigandage were not uncommon, the weaker people occasionally sought a benevolent and powerful master for protection against 'the laws of the jungle.'

- These people, slaves if they happened to survive their master, did not recover their freedom
2. Inherited. but were handed down to the legitimate heir along with other properties of the master. This is another variety of slave noticed by the law-givers (paitṛka,—Manu; dāyāgata,—Arth., Nār.) and the practice is fully borne out by other evidences.

- The child born of a female slave in the house of a master became a slave to the same master.
3. Born. This is alluded to as *gṛhaja udaradāsa* in Manu, the Arthaśāstra and Nārada and as *antojāto* in the Vinaya passage. Vidura the king's councillor enumerates this among the four kinds of slaves (*amāyadāsa*,—Jāt. VI. 285) and he himself is a specimen. The Jātakas give other instances of 'home-born' slaves (I. 452; VI. 110).

- We come to a later stage of development when slaves could be purchased for money (*krīta*,—Manu, Arth., Nār.; *dhanakkito*,—Vin. *dhanena kita*,—Jāt. VI. 285). In the Jātakas '*satena kitadāsa*' is a stock phrase indicating that 100 *kāhāpaṇas* is the conventional price of a slave (I. 224, 299). 700 *kāhāpaṇas* are "enough to buy slaves male and female" (*alam me ettakam dhanam dāsīdāsamulāya*, III. 343).
4. Purchased.

- Manu and Nārada recognise slavery by gift. In the Vessantara Jātaka an exiled prince gives
5. Gift. away his wife and children to a suitor (VI. 546). Such pious demonstrations were undoubtedly rare.

- According to the Arthaśāstra and Nārada one could be pledged or mortgaged to slavery. The
6. Mortgaged. state of mortgage continued till the debt was cleared. Of course the sale, gift or mortgage was open

only to the rightful owner of a person, i.e., to the master of a slave, to a husband, to a father or to kinsmen of a minor.

Perhaps a farther stage is revealed with enslavement by judicial punishment. This practice does not appear in the lists of Vinaya or of the Vidura-pañḍita Jātaka. Manu refers to it as 'daṇḍadāsa' and the Arthaśāstra as 'daṇḍapraṇīta'.<sup>1</sup> The commentators on Manu explain it as "because one cannot pay a debt or a fine." The Arthaśāstra lays down that a person enslaved by court decree shall earn that amount by work (daṇḍapraṇītaḥ karmaṇā daṇḍamupanayet), i. e., the culprit must earn and pay by hard labour the fine he is sentenced to. It is not made clear in any of the two passages whether this service is to be rendered to the state or to the sufferer. This form of penal servitude was certainly temporary expiring as soon as the fine, or decree was worked off. But in the Jātakas there are instances of 'life sentence' too. In the Kulāvaka Jātaka a gāmahojaka is reduced to slavery by the king's decree for bringing malicious charges against his people (I. 200). In the Mahā-ummagga Jātaka the king commutes death-sentence of four mischievous councillors and condemns them to slavery (VI. 463).

Nārāyaṇa and Nandana extend the *daṇḍadāsa* of Manu to include those who are sentenced to slavery for leaving a religious order. Viṣṇu emphatically declares: "An apostate from religious mendicancy shall become the king's slave" (V. 152). According to Nārada such an apostate is never to be emancipated

1 Cf. daṇḍapratikartṭ, II, 24.

(V. 35 ; Yāj. II. 183). But we have no concrete instances of such measures in the Jātakas. Obviously these pious rules were difficult to enforce and they reflect only a growing tendency against which the law-givers strove in vain.

Manu and Nārāda specify slaves serving for food.

9. For food. Nārāda 'says that this type of slave is released on giving up the subsistence.

But this being the condition his status differs very little from the labourer working for hire and paid with food (bhataka). Apparently the status of slavery was sometimes preferred by a pauper to that of a hireling whose position, it will be seen, was sometimes worse than that of his brethren.

It is clear that as want and starvation became acute, people sold their freedom for maintenance. Nārāda's list accordingly includes one taking to bondage for food in time of famine.

From Nārāda it appears that a debtor might have had to serve his creditor as slave until the payment of the debt with interest (V. 33). Therī Isidāsī, born as daughter of a poor carter, heavily encumbered with debts, was carried off as slave by a merchant in lieu of interest.

kapaṇamhi appabhoge dhanikapurisapātabahulamhi<sup>1</sup> 443  
taṃ maṃ tato satthavāho ussannāya vipulāya vaḍḍhiyā<sup>2</sup>  
okaḍḍhatī vilapantiṃ acchinditvā kulagharassa 444

—Therīgāthā

From the commentatorial note on 'daṇḍadāsa' in Manu it

1. iṇāyikānaṃ purisānaṃ adhipatanabahule bahūhi iṇāyikehi abhiḥhavitabbe. Paramatthadīpanī.

2 iṇavaḍḍhiyā. Ibid.

appears that this service might also be exacted in lieu of a debt (also Mbh. XII. 109. 18).

Voluntary enslavement is noticed in the Arthaśāstra (sakṛdātmādhātā) and in Nārada. It is referred to also in the Sumaṅgala Vilāsinī (I. 168) and in the Vidura-panḍita Jātaka (sayam pi upayanti dāsa). The motives of such self degradation might be manifold. It might be done as penance (Jāt. VI. 87). It might be done to save somebody else's life or freedom (VI. 135). Evidently such cases were rare.

'Won through wager' is another kind of slave in Nārada. In the Majjhima nīkāya there is a passage which says that a gambler by throwing a low cast with the

12. By wager. dice loses son, wife, all his possessions and finally goes himself into bondage (129). One is immediately reminded of the classic (but by no means solitary) instance of Draupadī in the notorious 'dice contest in the Mahābhārata (cf. I. 16. 20).

There might be other ways of reduction to slavery. The 'Magadhaṅs once under a spell of pestilence are seen

13. Miscellaneous growth of slavery. offering to be Jīvaka's slave if he cured them (Mv. I. 39). One marrying a female slave becomes a slave according to Nārada.<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note how with the advance of time and crystallisation of social institutions slavery became more and more institutionalised and its forms and varieties increased. At first, in the Vedic literature it was only the captive in war. The Vinayapiṭaka gives a list of

1 Nārada's list also contains 'one enslaved for a stipulated period' and one self-sold.' The significance is not made clear.

three, the Vidura-panḍita Jātaka in its verse four. In Manu the list is widened to seven, the Arthaśāstra evinces the knowledge of eight varieties leaving others specified, and as we come down to Nārada we are presented with a still wider list of fifteen.

The rigidity of the institution however did not mean 'once a slave, always a slave.' There were provisions for redemption and manumission was not unknown. A pledge or mortgage was recovered on clearance of debt (Arth., Nār.). One condemned for debt or with fine was free as soon as it was paid or worked off. One enslaved for subsistence or for a stipulated period attained freedom on termination of the condition. The Arthaśāstra enjoins and the Vessantara Jātaka shows that a slave could be released if somebody paid his price fixed at the time of sale or bequest. The exiled prince who gave away his children as slaves, put a price on them "as one puts a price on cattle" (goṇe agghapento viya taṭṭh'eva ṭhito kumāre agghāpesi). Eventually the grandfather of the children paid their price and procured their immunity (VI. 546f). According to Nārada one who saves his master's life in peril is entitled to liberty (V. 30). One made captive in fight, one won through wager and one voluntarily enslaved are to be released on giving a substitute of equal capacity (Nār, V. 34);<sup>1</sup> the husband of a female slave on parting with his wife (36).

But the commoner means of freedom was voluntary manumission given by the owner as an act of grace. This

1 A rule the observance of which was very doubtful. Cf. the case of Draupadī.

was open to all the varieties of slaves (Nār. V. 29). A slave girl brings to the housewife the happy tidings of arrival of her son who had turned a recluse and is promised manumission in a fit of ecstasy (Mn. 82). A master freed his slaves on the eve of renunciation (Jāt. V. 313). Kaṭāhaka, the runaway slave was traced but freed by his master (I, 451ff).

“The work which the slaves had to do was naturally extremely manifold and differed with the Function. social position of the master and the intelligence of the slave”<sup>2</sup> Kaṭāhaka was employed as store-keeper (*bhaṇḍāgārikakammaṃ karonto*) and Nanda was appointed by his master the guardian of his hidden property on behalf of his son. High-born and accomplished slaves to the king held high offices going up to the position of his councillor. As a rule however the work of the slave was of a lower nature.

To take care of the master's household, to attend to his body, to prepare his food and serve the Personal attendance. dinner, these were the commonest functions of a domestic slave. The slave Piṅgalā washed the feet of her master and the family before they retired to bed at night and even after that she sat on the door-sill to await the master's pleasure (Jāt. III. 100). With considerable detail, Kaṭāhaka describes the *dāsakammaṃ*,—how he would set the dishes, place the spittoons, look to the drink and fetch the fan and how he would minister to the master when he retired (I. 453). Among the ‘impure work’ which is reserved for slaves according to Nārada is ‘rubbing the

master's limbs when desired' (V. 7). They served also as bathing attendants (*ib.* 6; *Arth.* III. 13; *Jāt.* I. 383).

Apart from personal attendance, the domestic slave did all other menial work of the household.  
Domestic service.

A very common function of a female slave is pounding and winnowing of rice (I. 248; II. 428; III. 350) and spreading out the rice in the sun (I. 484). He or she is also seen clearing the leavings of food (*Nār.* V. 6; *Jāt.* IV. 145); sweeping the yards and stables (*Nār.* V. 5; *Jāt.* VI. 138); cleansing the bathing tank (*Jāt.* I, 484); fetching water (V. 284, 412); going on errands (I. 350).

Generally female slaves were maintained for domestic work. All the cases cited above except Industrial and Agricultural establishments. *Kaṭāhaka* (and *Jāt.* I. 350) were women (also *Mn.* 82). For outdoor work men were employed. The king's slaves served in the industrial and agricultural establishments of the state (*Arth.* II. 24) or fought in his array (*Rām.* II. 84. 7; *Jāt.* V. 412); private slaves plied in the big and small agricultural estate and industrial enterprise.

The institution of slavery was not as innocent as it would appear from the functions of a  
Hiring out of slaves, slave enumerated above. In the *Nāma-siddhi Jātaka* is a scene of a master and a mistress beating their slave for she had not brought home her wages (*ekam dāsiṃ bhaṭiṃ adadamānaṃ*, I. 402). It would appear that the master might let out the services of the slave on hire and thus make a profitable business out of him or her, since the slave had no right to earn and own property. In the *paccupanna-vatthu* of the *Māṃsa Jātaka* even the slaves of *bhikkhus* go to town to get dainty fare for their sick masters (III. 49).

Another evil feature was that the female slaves were very often kept for enjoyment, avowed or surreptitious. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish them from prostitutes and concubines. In the primitive concepts of social ethics this was the natural destiny for the wives and daughters of one slain in battle or made captive in war. Instances of slave women bearing children to their masters come from the later Vedic literature down to the Arthasāstra and the Jātakas (Ait. Br. II. 19; Kauṣ. Br. XII. 3; Arth. III. 13; Jāt. IV. 145, 298). The king's female slaves are to serve as bath-room attendants, shampooers, bedding room servants, washer-women and flower garland-makers (snāpaka-saṃrāhak'-āstaraka-rajaka-mālākārakarma dāsyah kuryuh, Arth. I. 21). Prostitutes and female slaves incapable of providing enjoyment to king (bhagnabhogā) are to be employed in the stores or kitchen. Female slaves are trained along with royal prostitutes in the arts of entertainment and feminine wiles (II. 27). In the public taverns it was not an extraordinary spectacle to find a *dasi* with blooming youth and beauty (peśalarūpā) lying in intoxication with her master (II. 25). This was the natural social consequence emerging out of the maintenance of large number of women slaves within the household.<sup>1</sup>

The code of treatment of a slave by a master and of reciprocal duties and relations as formulated in didactic

1 It might of course happen, although very rarely, that a master gives the status of wife or daughter-in-law to his female slave (Amṛta-Pv. Com. IV. 12; Therīg., 445). On the reverse the Jātakas furnish instances of the master's wife and daughter falling in love with or marrying their male slave.

pieces it fairly enlightened and high. In the words of Buddha Code of treatment: slaves and servants form the nadir (heṭṭhimā dīsā) among the six quarters that the Aryan master has to protect; and he (1) assigns them work according to their strength (yathābalaṃ kamanta-samvidhānena), (2) supplies them with food and wages (bhatta-vetanānuppādānena), (3) tends them in sickness (gilānu paṭṭhānena), (4) shares with them unusual delicacies (acchariyānaṃ rasānaṃ samvibhāgena), (5) grants leave at times (samaye vossaggena).<sup>1</sup> The slaves and workmen respond to such good ministration in five ways: (1) they rise before him, (2) they lie down to rest after him, (3) they are content with what is given to them, (4) they do their work well, (5) they carry about his praise and good fame. (Dn. XXXI. 27). Aśoka exhorts the proper treatment of slaves and hirelings along with friends and relatives as consonant with *dhamma* (R. E. XIII). According to Apastamba, the master should not stint the slave even though he and his wife and children go short of necessities, ii, 4, 9, 11. According to Manu, the master's duty is to give funeral *piṇḍa* to the sonless slaves and to maintain them when old and weak. The Sūdra, on the other hand, must never leave his master whatever may be his sufferings. He should maintain his master besides his own family, when the latter suffers a loss of wealth (*dravya-parikṣaye*, Mbh. XII. 60. 35f). He stands in respectable company with parents, brothers, children, daughters-in-law and female relatives of his master with whom a Snātaka should never

<sup>1</sup> Constant relaxation so that they need not work all day, and special leave with extra food and adornment for festivals, etc.—Buddha-ghosa, Cf. Jāt. III. 435.

have quarrels (IV. 180). A slave is as one's shadow whose offence the master should bear without resentment as of his brother, wife, son and daughter (IV. 184f). According to the Arthaśāstra those who do not heed the claims of their slaves, hirelings and relatives shall be taught their duty (II. 1).

The fundamental fact of the legal position of the slave was his complete loss of *persona*. He was the master's chattel as much as oxen, buffaloes, gold and silver (Jāt. I. 341), or as oxen, gold, garments, sandal-wood, horses, treasures, jewels, etc. (V. 223). The master had the right to recover him if he ran away (I. 451. 458) or disposed himself to another master (Nār. V. 40). He had the right to make a bequest of him to another (Jāt. VI. 138). He was just as Vidura, the councillor, describes himself: "I am a slave from my birth; my weal and woe come from the king, I am the king's slave even if I go to another, he may give me by right to thee."

Addhā pi yonito ahaṃ pi jāto  
bhavo ca rañño abhavo ca rañño  
dās'ahaṃ devassa paraṃ pi gantvā  
dhammena maṃ māṇava tuyhaṃ dajjā ti,  
VI. 285

As will be seen below the master could take the life of his slave with impunity.

A slave can have no property (Mbh., XII. 60. 37; VIII. 416f), i.e. he cannot earn money by working for others (adhigacchanti parakarma-karaṇādina, —Nārāyaṇa). Whatever he earns belongs to his master (Mbh. I. 82. 22ff; V. 33. 68; Nār. V. 41). The doors of the Saṃgha were closed to him (Mv. I. 46). He could not enter an agreement unless

authorised (Arth. III. 1). He could not stand as witness except in case of failure of qualified witnesses (Manu, VIII. 66, 70).

These legal disabilities do not discord with the idealised relation between a master and a slave outlined above which ignores any right on behalf of the slave. Nor does his inferior social status. In Manu and in the Śāntiparva (242. 20) he appears as an integral part of the master's family,<sup>1</sup> deserving of treatment similar to the members of the household. If a slave sometimes figures in the less respectable company of cows, mares, she-camels, she-buffaloes, she-goats and ewes (of which the issue belongs to the owner of the mother,—Manu, IX. 48; cf. Jāt. I. 341; V. 223), this is no paradox. For the *magna familia* of the Aryan householder embraced within its fold these domestic animals as much as the slaves. Animals had as much claim to kind treatment as slaves (Aśoka's R. E. XIII) and neither had the social status of the other members of the family. This is shown in characteristic fashion in the Nānacchanda Jātaka. Puṇṇā, the female slave is offered a boon along with the master, the mistress, the son and the daughter-in-law. While they ask for a village, 100 milch cows, a car and ornaments, she for a pestle, a mortar and a winnowing basket (II. 428).

This Puṇṇā receives from her master the epithet—'jammī,' meaning 'the low, contemptible.' 'Thou wilt be a slave,' is a serious form of curse (Mbh. I. 16. 19ff). *Dāsiputta* is a universal term of abuse (Jāt. I. 225; III. 233; IV. 41). King Vidudabha is insulted as the 'son of a slave-girl' even by a slave woman (IV. 145). Children of

slave-girls by their masters did not get over this stigma.<sup>1</sup> Mahānāma the Sākya cannot dine with his daughter Vāsavakhattiyā by the slave Nagamuṇḍā. Bodhisatta, as king's chaplain, disports with a slave-girl, but cannot give his family name to the bastard born to him (IV. 298).

The legal and social position of the slave being what it was, his habitual lot was not to be petted and fondled like a foster child. The slave Kaṭāhaka learnt

Treatment : chain and whip. writing with his master and "two or

three handicrafts (vohāre) and grew up to be a fair-spoken and handsome youngman' (vacanakusalo yuvā abhirūpo ahoṣi). Brought up in the refinements of his master's house, he could successfully pose abroad as his master's son. With a master like Bodhisatta such treatment is intelligible, but even with such a master, the slave could not escape the fear that "at the slightest fault he shall be beaten, chained, branded and fed in slave's fare" (tālītvā bandhitvā lakkhaṇena oṇketvā dāsapari-bhogena pi paribhuñjissanti. I. 451). It is wonderful that Mrs. Rhys Davids finds only two instances of actual ill-treatment in Buddhist literature<sup>2</sup>; the one where a slave tires the temper of her mistress by persistent late-rising and is struck in the head with a lynchpin causing bleeding (Mn. 21); the other where a girl is beaten with rope by her master and mistress for not bringing home her wages (Jāt. I. 402 f). In Buddha's discourse slaves and servants are said to be obeying the inhuman orders of a king harried by stripes and fears (daṇḍatajjitā bhayatajjitā. Mn. 51 ; Sn. I. 75). "Men acquire

<sup>1</sup> Ait. Br. II. 19 ; Kauṣ Br. XII. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Camb. His., Ch. VIII, p. 205.

men as slaves and by beating, binding and by otherwise subjugating them make them work day and night. These people are not ignorant of the pain that is caused by beating and chains."

Mānuṣā mānuṣāneva dāsabhāvena bhuñjate  
Vadhabandha nirodhena kārayanti divānīśam  
Ātmanaścāpi jānāti yadduḥkhaṃ vadhabandhane,  
Mbh. XII. 261. 38f.

The cruel master in the Vessantara Jātaka ties the hands of the boy and the girl with a creeper and holding it tight beats them and drives them on. "Where he struck them the skin was cut, the blood ran, when struck, they staggered against each other back to back"<sup>1</sup> (VI. 546f). In the Rajjumāla-vimāna (Vimānavatthu) occurs the doleful sketch of a maid-servant who was abused right and left and when she grew up, had a liberal deal of blows and fisticuffs. She was taken by the hair for slaps and kicks. She tried to escape with a shave but it made her lot worse. The mistress was aroused at her tonsured poll. She bound her head with a rope and pulled it down with a wrench whenever it pleased her fancy. The maid was thus nicknamed *rajjumāla*. Weary of her life she thought of deliverance by committing suicide in the jungle which was happily averted. Such apparently was the common lot of slaves as insinuated in Sakka's talk with a maid who would not weep at the death of her master's son. "You must have been oppressed, beaten and abused

1 There is a perceptible element of exaggeration to make a perfect villain of the Brāhmaṇa and demonstrate the piety and fortitude of the prince who is a Bodhisattva.

by him and therefore, thinking he is happily dead, you weep not" (Jāt II. 167).

Nūna tvaṃ iminā piḷetvā bādhelvā pariḷuttā bhavissasi, tasmā 'sumato-ayan' ti no rodasīti. The same treatment to a *dāsi* is echoed in the commentary on the *Uragapetavatthu*, I. 12 :—

Yadi evam tena taṃ poṭhetvā veyyavaccakāritā bhavissasi tasmā maññe sumuttāhaṃ tena matenāti na rodasīti.

In both cases the insinuation is denied and in the *Jātaka* story, it is said that the young master was full of love and pity for his slave—'te samagḷā sammodamānā piyasamvāsā ahesum.' But this was a Bodhisatta family and Sakka's words more correctly represent the standard.

The toll of misery did not always end with beating and binding or other ingenious devices of tortures. A *seṭṭhi*'s daughter is afraid that her father would cut her and her slave lover to pieces if he heard of their liaison (Jāt. I. 120). In the *Nāgavimāna* we read that the guard of a sugarcane field (*ucchupālaka*) in the employ of a *Brāhmaṇa* was clubbed to death by his master for having improvised a hut to accommodate some *bhikkhus* and given them canes to eat.

taṃ sutvā brāhmaṇo kupito anattamano taṭataṭāyamāno kodhābhibhūto tassa piṭṭhito upadhāvitvā muggarena taṃ paharanto ekappahāren' eva jivitā voropesi (VvA. V. 12).

The servile class (*dārajāti*) should be given by their masters used articles and torn clothes no longer fit for wear *adhāryāṇi viśīrṇāni vasanāṃ*, Mbh. XII. 60. 33 ; Jāt. I. 371). Broken rice (*kaṇḍjaka*) and sour gruel were their habitual food (An. I. 145). 'A slave's fare' is a common phrase of abuse in the *Jātakas* (*dāseparibhoga*, I. 451, 459). The *Arthasāstra* gives a

'Slave's fare.'

foretaste of this stuff when it says that bad liquor (*duṣṭasurā*) fit for selling at lower than standard price may conveniently go into the ration of slaves, hirelings or hogs and draught animals (II. 25). The slave was not even entitled to a square meal. Hewas to get provision in proportion to the work done (*yathā-puruṣa-parivāpaṃ bhaktaṃ kuryāt*, II. 24 ; cf. *Jāt.* III. 300).

That the slave's was not an enviable lot is also clear from the fact that freedom was highly prized<sup>1</sup> and that he sometimes ran away from his master's house (*Jāt.* I. 451, 458). Even the *Arthaśāstra*, which is otherwise so liberal, has to admit that a run-away slave forfeits the right of redemption.<sup>2</sup>

When a slave was discharged from bondage, no legal or social stigma attached to him any more. The ban of the *saṃgha* was lifted from him (*Dn.* II, 35). Freed slave.

But the mere fact that a slave could earn freedom does not necessarily mean amelioration. If he was competent to settle in a skilled profession it was the better for him. For a poor unskilled person it was into the fire from the frying pan, i.e. either a change of master or service as a labourer for hire.

As a matter of fact, it was not the status of slavery which was so degrading, the degradation was inherent in the class which served as drudge to the higher orders. In this light is to be read the injunction of *Manu* that a *Śūdra*, even if set free, is not released from servitude—"for who can take away that which is inborn in him ?" (VIII. 4-14). This

<sup>1</sup> *Tato nidānaṃ labhetha pāmujjaṃ, adbhigacche somanassaṃ*, 'Mn. 39.

<sup>2</sup> It is strange of Mrs. Rhys Davids to say "we do not meet with run-away slaves." *Loc. cit.*

also explains the two sets of rules, seemingly contradictory, in the Dharmaśāstras and in the Arthaśāstra. Those very 'impure works' (sweeping ordure, urine, leavings of food ; attending to the master while naked), which Nārada assigns to a slave, are prohibited for him in the Arthaśāstra. While Manu and Nārada countenance no rights of property for a slave, the Arthaśāstra allows him to earn, own and inherit property. Even after his death, his kinsmen have the priority of claim on his property over the master. Sale and mortgage into slavery are laid under severe stricture. Chastity of a female slave is meticulously guarded not only against the master but against royal officers and every debauch with heavy fine and violation entitles her to freedom (*i.e.*, forfeiture of value on the part of the master, —*mūlyanāśa*).

While Manu declares that a Śūdra is not released from servitude by being set free, the Arthaśāstra rules that an Ārya does not lose his birth-right (*āryabhāva*) even if enslaved. If it is true that in the latter the Śūdra is not a distinctly separated category from the Ārya as in the former but a part of it, that only indicates that the Śūdra of the Arthaśāstra is not the same class as the Śūdra of Manu. It is remarkable that the liberal rules of the Arthaśāstra are confined to the one and the main chapter (*dāsakalpa*) and its cursory references elsewhere do not adhere to the same enlightened principles. These latter were applicable to large classes of people who stood between the border lines of the Śūdra and Mleccha groups. *i.e.*, who were neither absorbed within nor kept in complete isolation from the Aryan social organism. The privilege accrued to the upper classes degraded to slavery, the Āryas proper. The instance of the *Vessantara Jātaka* is a clear proof of this proposition. The

prince, who gives her daughter to slavery, puts a high price on her lest a low-born should pay it and 'break her birth-right' (*jātisambhedana kāreyya*).

In the *Arthaśāstra*, the Mlecchas are expressly kept out of the privileges. The suggestion readily occurs that they formed the bulk of slavery. But certainly a Mleccha could not be put into a job which brought him into personal contact with an Aryan master. It appears that *Śūdras*, i.e., the lowest of the Aryan fold or the aborigines who became an appendage to the Aryan system, supplied the mass of slave labour, not the Mlecchas of whom even the sight and air were reprehensible, nor the upper orders who were occasionally relegated by freaks of fortune. This is why in *Manu* and in the didactic episodes of the Epics, *dāsa* and *śūdra* go synonymously. This is why 'dāsa' is so often distinctly referred to as a *jāti*, i.e., a class by birth and not a functional group.

The actual condition and life of this class, though not enviable, was better than that of the slaves of ancient Greece and Italy or of the late 'white plantations.' When *Megasthenes* said that the Indians do not employ slaves, he only brought forth this contrast. Unlike those countries again, the number of slaves in India, though large, was a fraction of the labouring class. The work of degrading manual labour was shared between the slave, the free hired labourer and a host of Mlecchas and *hīnajātis*. Hence in India the basis of economic life was not slavery and the Eastern counterpart of the slave of Rome and Sparta in all-round exploitation was not the *dāsa* but the last of the classes mentioned above.

## CHAPTER II

### HIRED LABOUR

**Free Labour:—**agricultural and pastoral; industrial; mercantile; domestic; miscellaneous, Origin in pauperism. Modes of payment. Degradation and devaluation of labour. Wage and Profit rates. Free contract? Terms of hire. Slave labour and hired labour. The Labourer and the Outcast. Paucity of labour unrest.

In the scale of economic gradation the hired labourer stood just below the slave. Leaving aside the better artisans who were more or less organised in guilds and had the instruments of collective bargaining to secure good terms of agreement, the unskilled 'hands' are found distributed in five categories.

While the small farmer carried on agricultural operations single-handed or with the co-operation of the family, a remarkable division of agricultural labour and employment of operatives in large numbers is noticeable in the big estates of solvent landowners. In the Pali literature they are seen working in diminutive gangs under big merchants and farmers such as, for example, under the cattle-magnate Dhaniya of the Suttanipāṭa (I. 2. Com.) and the agriculturist Kāsi-bhāradvāja in the same work (I. 4; cf. Sn. I. 171; Jāt. IV. 276). The Sākya and the Koliya clans appear in the *paccupannavatthu* of the Kunāla Jātaka as working their estates jointly by means of a horde of *dāsas* and

*kāmmakkaras*—bondsmen who had no standing in the corporate body holding a position akin to serfs and villians of feudal society (V. 412).<sup>1</sup> The mass of slaves and hired labour in agricultural work were employed separately for tillage, field-watching, harvesting, tending and grazing cattle and for dairy production. There were professional ploughmen (*kaṣiṃ katvā jīvikam kappentassa*, Jāt. II. 165; *bhaṭiṃ vā kaṣiṃ vā katvā laddhavibhavānurūpena yagubhattā-dīni sampādetvā pitaram posesi*, IV. 43); field-watchers who had huts built close by the field and had their meals there and dwelt there day and night (Jāt. III. 52; IV. 276; Sn. IV. 195f); and even winnowers of grain available for hire.

Hired labour appears side by side with slave labour also in spinning, weaving or other manufactures whether in state establishments or with private owners. Instances of the former are furnished in the *Arthaśāstra* (II. 23). In a Jātaka story we come across a tailor in the employ of a merchant (*seṭṭhim nissāya vasantassa tunnakārassa tunnakammena jīviṣṣāma*, Jāt. IV. 38).

The slave and hireling were employed in mercantile and marine labour to hawk the wares of the master or to serve in the deck. A rich Brāhmaṇa sails to *Suvaṇṇabhūmi* with merchandise and slaves and servants (*dāsakammakarā*) to multiply his wealth (IV. 15); *Mittavindaka* hires himself out as drudge in a vessel voyaging on deep sea (I. 239; II. 103). In the *Milindapañho*, a deck labourer in a sea-going vessel

1 *Supra*, p. 23.

thinks in the vein "I am a wage-earner serving in this ship and get my food and wages hereby (bhatako ahaṃ, imāya nāvāya kammaṃ karomi, imāyāhaṃ nāvāya vāhasā bhattavetaṇaṃ labhāmi, p. 379)."

The hired man served in menial household work along with the slave in the house of rich merchants and land-owners (Jāt. III. 129). Besides these, were sundry job-seekers without any 'fixed employment who stood between vagrancy and starvation, who eked out a miserable existence by any chance engagement, whose services might be requisitioned for a month, fortnight, or even a day (Vṛ. XVI. 9) and who sometimes offered themselves for a particular work apparently with many masters at a time, e.g., the water-carriers (pāṇiyahārakā) who rear up a street dog (Jāt. II. 246), the water-carrier of the Gaṅgamāla Jātaka (bhatiko udakabhatīṃ katvā) of whom we shall know more anon and Piṅguttara and his associates who clean the road for the king going to disport in the park (VI. 348).

The advent of the new labouring class after the slaves is obviously due to economic depression. The origin of slavery was in the right of the strong over the weak,—of hired labour in want and penury. It is only as late as in Pāṇini that we come across this parvenu (vetana, vaitanika' IV. 4. 12). The rules of the Arthaśāstra and of the Dharmaśāstras are an illuminating commentary on the scanty data of the Pali canon and they lead to the unmistakable inference (despite the contrary opinion held in certain authoritative quarters<sup>1</sup>) that living

Origin in Pauperism.

was not easy for all, that want and plenty prevailed side by side and that although people held it degrading to work for hire, the number of persons reduced to such straits was by no means small. There must have been a wide prevalence of pauperism when want and starvation became a factor impelling people to sell themselves to slavery (bhaktadāsa; Manu, XVIII. 415). This same factor explains why inspite of the degradation of hired labour to a lower economic status, its ranks were swelled by perpetual supply from the landless and the destitute.

The wage-earner was commonly paid in money but he might be paid also in food or in both (Arth. II. 24; Vṛ. XVI. 13; Jāt. IV. 43). Other curious Modes of payment. mediums of payment are also mentioned in the Jātakas. In the higher courses of learning the pupils are admitted by teachers for an honorarium or for personal attendance and between the two discrimination is made in favour of the former :

dhāmmantevāsikā divā ācariyassa kammaṃ katvā rattim sippam uggaṇhanti, ācariyabhāgaḍāyakā gehe jetṭhaputtā viya hurvā sippam eva uggaṇhanti. II. 278.

Veda never told his pupils to perform any work or to obey implicitly his own behests ; "for having himself experienced much woe while abiding in the family of his preceptor, he liked not to treat them with severity."

duḥkhābhijñō hi gurukulavāsasya śiṣyān parikleśena yojayitum neyeṣa. Mbh. I. 81.

A Brāhmaṇa youth serves a *caṇḍāla* as menial to acquire a charm (Jāt. IV. 200). A girl is taken to service for three years in a family for a scarlet robe (kusumbharattavattthena bhatim karomi V. 212), and a wife is "obtained after working for seven years in a house" (sattasaṃvaccharāṇi ghare katvā

laddhabhāriyā, VI. 338). The worker in these cases receives a specified reward for which he has a fancy and accordingly lets his service unconditionally for a period demanded by the master.

Although the subject of these illustrations must not be classed with ordinary hired labourers and although these illustrations fall outside the ordinary terms of service, they point uniformly to a low valuation of labour. In the popular stories the workers' normal diet is coarse rice-gruel (kummāsa-piṇḍa, Jāt. III. 406) and it never pretends to anything above the *yagubhatta*. In the Mahāummagga Jātaka, a potter's hireling after a full day's work with clay and the wheel, "sat all clay-besmeared on a bundle of straw eating balls of barley-groat dipt in a little soup."

Mattikaṃ āharitvā cakkam vattetvā mattikamakkhita-sarīram palālapīṭhake nisīditvā muṭṭhiṃ muṭṭhiṃ katvā appasūpaṃ yavabhataṃ bhuñjamānaṃ, VI.—372.

Sutana cannot make both ends meet and thinks, "I get a *māsaka* or a half-*māsaka* for my wages and can hardly support my mother," and he ventures to meet a *yakkha* and certain death for a thousand pieces with which his mother may be provided (III. 326). A pathetic humour pervades the story of the water-carrier who saved a half-*māsaka* in the city-rampart and was so transported by the thought of spending it on a festive day together with another half-*māsaka* saved by his water-carrier wife<sup>1</sup> that he ecstatically ran singing league after league to fetch the treasure under scorching sun

<sup>1</sup> Not strictly according to law, for the two had only cohabited (*kapaṇṭhiya saddhiṃ sampvāsaṃ kappesi*). A casual word gives a vivid glimpse into the life and social status of these people.

rays, "in yellow clothes with a palm-leaf fastened to his ear." The happy pair thus budgeted their savings of one *māsaka* : "we will buy a garland with one part of it, perfume with another, and strong drink with a third" (III. 446).

The average daily income of the workman was, therefore, the smallest copper piece in currency which is far below the living wage. Such pittance of wage are corroborated in the *Arthaśāstra* which fixes a *paṇa* and a quarter per mensem<sup>1</sup> for agricultural labourers and field-watchers with provisions proportionate to the amount of work done (II. 24). They are not always entitled to a square meal and sometimes the diet actually varies according to labour. The sight of a begging monk coming with full alms-bowl from his house inspires the thought in the *seṭṭhi* that if his *dāsas* and *kammakaras* had got that food he could have more work out of them, and he sighs for the loss sustained ( *Jāt* III. 300 ).

Wages might be fixed or variable or they might be assessed at a fraction of the gain. In its regulations on textile labour, the *Arthaśāstra* lays down that wages are to vary according to the quality and quantity of the yarn produced ; only artisans who can turn out a given amount of work in a given time may be engaged on fixed wages (II. 23). *Vṛhaspati* distinguishes between servants engaged on pay and servants engaged for a share of the gain (XVI. 8). But

Wages and Profit  
rates.

1 I.e., 20 *māśakas* a month, or  $2/3$  *māśaka* per day. Manu's rate is 1 *paṇa* or 16 *māśakas* for the lowest menials, 6 *paṇas* or 96 *māśakas* for the highest, plus 1 *droṇa* of grain, i.e., 4 *āḍhakas* or 512 *palas* (Com.) and clothing every 6 months (VII. 126). Thus the daily wages are  $1/2.3$  *māśakas* with  $1/30$  *droṇa* of grain and clothing after 6 months.

whatever the mode of payment, wages are uniformly of a low standard. The rates for share of profit are standardized by experts (*kuśalāḥ*) at 1/10 of crop for the cultivator, of butter for the herdsman and of sale proceeds for the pedlar (Arth. III. 13 ; Yāj. II. 194 ; Nār. VI. 2. 3). This astonishingly inequitable rule is somewhat liberalised by Vṛhaspati who entitles a cultivator's servant to 1/5 of the crop *plus* food and clothing or only 1/3 of the crop (XVI. 13).<sup>1</sup> How labour was estimated in proportion to capital is best illustrated in the regulation of the Śāntiparva fixing only 1/7 of produce for the cultivator who borrows the seed from others, the same share being fixed for traders with others' capital (60. 25f). To revert to Nārada's rule, "For tending 100 cows a heifer shall be given to the herdsman as wages every year, for tending 200 cows a milch cow shall be given to him annually and he shall be allowed to milk all the cows every eighth day" (VI. 10). In the Śāntiparva he is allowed the milk of 1 cow for tending 6 kine and 1 pair for keeping 100 (60. 25). And these rates are hardly more lucrative than the profit rate when the grave responsibilities of the herdsman tending his cattle in beast and robber-ridden forests are taken into account.

A contract entered into before appointment between the employer and the employee on the wages and the terms

1 Cf. the present rate prevailing in the districts of Western Bengal where the landless cultivator (*khet majur*) gets between 1/3 and 1/2 of produce and the sleeping landowner the rest. In Bihar and Orissa the *kamia* and *halvaha* get 1½ srs. of coarse grain for one day's labour and 8-10 *kuttahs* of land with a little additional income in the harvesting season. Cf. also the more liberal rule of the Arthashastra on behalf of cultivators in crown-lands who obtained 1/4 or 1/5 of produce (II. 24).

of service is frequently dealt with by jurists and politicians.

Free contract ?

This contract, freely agreed to between the parties so often propounded with zest, was no less a fiction than the freedom of contract insisted upon with cant by the anti-trade-unionists of the Victorian age and meant little less than terms dictated by the moneyed master to the destitute toiler with starvation staring in the face whose vocation required no technical skill and who had no organisation like the *seṇī* and the *gaṇa* and no leader like the *jeṭṭhaka* or *pamukha* to bargain for a higher pay and better working conditions. Labour legislation of the Dharmaśāstras shows that public conscience was not alive to the fundamental inequity in distribution of wealth, because these protective laws were themselves derived from ancient tradition and current usage except for a thin humanitarian gloss which is less perceptible in popular literature reflecting actual conditions of society. The injunction that an "ill-considered and improper" agreement shall not be enforced is only a pious wish, and even if it was ever observed, the proper and standard rate was enough by itself to make the small wage-earner chafe in life.

The field-watcher was liable to a fine or compensation for any loss. The watchman of the *Sālikedāra Jātaka* to whom were delivered by a *Brāhmaṇa* farmer 500 *karisas* of land for a wage, is afraid when the plot is ravaged by parrots, that "the *Brāhmaṇa* will have a price put on the rice and debit it from my account" (*sālim agghāpetvā mayham iṇaṃ karissati*, IV, 276 ff.). Thus the hireling had responsibilities unlike the slave for any injury to his master's chattel or to the job undertaken. Any deficit out of the estimated output from the quantity of raw materials supplied must be made good from the wages—so goes the rule of the *Arthaśāstra* on

textile labour (sūtrahrāse vetanahrāsaḥ dravyasāḥ, II. 23). If fines are remitted in special cases considering accident, disease, etc., the loss incurred by the employer must be compounded by extra work (*ibid*). Payment may be withheld if circumstances change since the employment and if workmanship is below the employer's satisfaction (deśa-kālātīpātanena karmaṇāṃ anyathā karaṇe vā na sakāma kṛtamanumanyeta, III. 14; cf Yāj. II. 195). For negligence of work a hired tiller or herdsman is to be flogged (Āpast. II 11. 28. 2f). A workman who abandons his work before the expiry of the term shall forfeit his whole wages and pay a fine of 100 paṇas to the king (Viṣ. V. 153f). He is responsible for the "implements of the work and whatever else may have been entrusted to them for their business" (Nār. VI. 4) The herdsman is accountable for the damage done by cattle in others' fields (Gaut. XII. 20fr Manu, VIII 240; Viṣ XII. 20-26; Yāj II. 162) and for loss of cattle through the depredation of thieves, robbers, wild beasts, reptiles, diseases and accidents unless he exerts himself timely to prevent the loss—a thing certainly not very easy to establish when the onus of proof remains on him (Arth. II. 29<sup>1</sup>; Āpast. II. 11. 28. 6; Manu, VIII. 232; Yāj. II. 164; Nār VI. 11-17 Viṣ. V 136).

The economic position and security of these unskilled hands who plied in big plantations or purveyed manual labour from door to door on a short term service was thus in many respects worse than that of the slaves. In the Milinda the *bhatikas* are put among the most degraded sort of work-people while the *dāsaputtas* stand in best company (p. 331).

Slave labour and  
Hired labour.

These latter were at least well-fed like domestic animals. In the Jātaka stories paid servants are not always admitted to the facilities which slaves commonly enjoy. The amenities of the master's home were not for them. As regards general social status there was little to choose between a slave and a free labourer. A 'hireling' is as much a term of abuse as a slave' (Jāt II. 94). With the slave he is classed with oxen and buffaloes (I. 341).<sup>1</sup> King Yudhiṣṭhira is instructed to exact labour from artisans only with the payment of food as unto kine and asses (Mbh. XIII. 95. 39). His position depended primarily on the master's solvency and sense of humanity and secondarily on his own brawns and brains, as much as did the slave's. A petty craftsman's apprentice had generally a hard lot (VI. 372) with little prospect of mitigation under any circumstances: but with a rich master the position is not necessarily reversed. We have a miserly merchant who grudges the alms to a monk which might be spent for returns over his half-fed labourers and slaves (III. 300) and we have the counterparts in a rich and pious merchant whose labourers are engaged in outdoor work under good living conditions and with a square meal (III. 445f) and in a Brāhmaṇa whose wagemen even give alms and observe fast and moral rules (IV. 50).

Lest workmen should spoil work in hand, the author of the Arthaśāstra forbids indiscriminate sale of liquor to them and in a curious fit of contradiction, a few lines below he gives the economic advice that bad liquor, fit for selling at reduced price, may conveniently be given to slaves and

1 Among hired workers, Vṛhaspati classifies the warrior, the cultivator, the porter and the household servant in descending order of status (XVI. 10).

workmen in lieu of wages ; or it may form the drink of beasts for draught or the subsistence of hogs.

dāsakarmakarebhyo vā vetanaṃ dadyāt. Vāhana-prati-pānaṃ sūkara-poṣaṇaṃ vā dadyāt, II. 25.

The sentiment underlying the bare statement is more eloquent than pages of theorising and legislation.

In their social segregation and economic position these people stood on a par with the still lower underdogs of the Indian Society—the *conḍālas*, the *pukkusas*, the *veṇas*, the *nesādas*, the *rathakāras*, etc., who settled in villages of their own outside the habitat of the ordinary people. The serving folk as well are sometimes seen to dwell outside the city or village gate as befitted their economic and social position (Jāt. I. 239 ; III. 446 ; VI. 348) and acknowledge that indication of social inferiority (V. 441 ; VI. 156 ; Mn. V ; Mbh. XIII 22. 22). The localisation and isolation of the free proletariat was not, indeed it could not be, as thorough as in the case of their prototypes,—the *mleccha* and the *hīnajāti*, and they never attained to the community and solidarity of caste in the stricter sense. There are instances of Brāhmaṇas and Gahapatis taking to servile occupations under the chill of adversity (Jāt. I. 111, 475 ; II. 139 ; III. 325 ; Sut., p. 119). But the great mass was evidently composed of the socially degraded classes in whom "the profession of a hired labourer was as much hereditary as the poverty connected with it"<sup>1</sup> and who had hardly any chance of access to a more respectable and remunerative calling.<sup>2</sup> The elements of the upper

1 Fick: *Die Soziale Gliederung*, p. 193.

2 There is one instance in the Jātakas where a king honours a tiller of the soil with the post of *seṭṭhi* (I. 422).

classes relegated by shufflings of fate were probably equated with them after a short course of levelling process. Thus it becomes intelligible why tradition called it the direct misfortune that a freeman should work for hire in another's land and how the fluctuations of fate of earlier days had a gradual tendency to give way to concentration and perpetuation of poverty in a plebeian caste,<sup>1</sup>—a caste scattered and heterogeneous without the blessings of a communal life. And it is because this caste did not crystallise into a community and because it was numerically smaller than the superior castes and smaller than the labour population of ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome, that it did not mature into an explosive material seething with perennial discontent under the superstructure of civilisation and material prosperity.<sup>2</sup>

1 Note the term 'daliddakula' frequently used in the Jātakas.

2 Times have since changed. They are now as scattered, ill-organised, degraded and impoverished as before but their number has immensely multiplied. Together with the under-ryots whose lots are not improved with the successive tenancy laws, they are rapidly growing into an organised menace to the existing social order.

## CHAPTER III

### DESPISED CASTES AND RACES

#### *The hīnajāti*

I. The Caṇḍāla : Origin. Appearance. Arts and professions ; corpse-burner, executioner, hunter, magician. Habitat. Social segregation. Social and economic disabilities. General status.

II. The Pukkusa : Origin. Profession. Status.

III. The Nesāda : Origin and identity. Racial and professional stigma. The hunting profession, *luḍḍaka*, *kevaṭṭa*. Methods, equipments and accessories for hunting and fishing. Habitat, Social status.

IV. The Veṇa : Ethnico-professional castes. Status. Craft.

V. The Rathakāra : Origin and degradation. Craft ; chariot-building, leather-work. Status.

*The āpasada* or mixed castes. Inferior races.

Side by side with the four *vaṇṇas* constituted by Aryan invaders, the social physiognomy presents a host of despised castes and professions represented by the *hīnajāti*. aboriginal races going under the general brand of *mleccha* or *hīnajāti*. Pāṇini knows them as the class of *aniravasitas* below the Śūdras (2- 4. 10). The Pali literature picks up five of these pariah castes for constant mention. The Suttapibhaṅga Pācittiya enumerates them in contradistinction from the privileged estates of Brāhmaṇa and Khattiya : *hīnā nāmā jāti caṇḍālajāti veṇajāti nesādajāti pukkusajāti esā hīnā nāmā jāti* (II. 2. 1). These five appear associated in a conglomerate class of outcasts also in other passages (Mn. 93, 96, 129 ; An. II. 85 ; Sn. I. 93 ; Pug. IV. 19).

1. The *Caṇḍāla*

In Indian tradition the *caṇḍāla* has always been the by-word for subjection and contempt. The Origin.

earliest references are seen in the Yajurveda Saṃhitās and in the Upaniṣads. They show clearly that the *caṇḍāla* was a degraded caste but yield no particulars<sup>1</sup> Fick suggests that they were originally a tribal body.<sup>2</sup> After the first Aryan invasion the conquerors and the conquered were divided into two broad social categories — *āryavarna* and *dāsavarna*. Gradually the *dāsavarna* or the defeated aboriginals yielded to numerous sub-castes or classes in a social hierarchy taking positions according to their loyalty to the victors and to the adoption of the foreign culture. Those who remained outside the Aryan social scheme were reduced to a medley of pariahs and under-dogs. Among these outcasts some were ethnic groups, held together by a common race (*hīnajāti*) humiliated for their despicable callings. The *caṇḍāla* was at the bottom of the ladder. The Brāhmaṇical theory that he is the issue of a Śūdra husband and a Brāhmaṇa wife reveals only a jealous attempt to preserve the purity of the stock against the growing menace of *pratiloma* marriage. If the children of these marriages did really sink down to the status of *caṇḍālas*, certainly that does not explain the origin of the caste and Fick's suggestion seems to be substantially correct.

That the *caṇḍālas* were aboriginal local tribes with their peculiar trades and professions and social customs crystall-

1 Ch. Up., V. 107 ; 24.4 . Āśv. Gṛ. S., iv. 1 ; Sām. Gṛ. S., ii. 12 ; vi. 1, etc. Vājasaneyī-Sām. xxx. 21 ; Tait. Br. III. 4. 17. 1 ; Pṛ. Up. iv. 1. 22.

2 Op. cit., 204 ff.

ised later into a caste or community under the rigid isolation forced upon them by the Aryan or Aryanised society is gathered from the bulk of Pali evidences as well as Epic literature.

The Rāmāyaṇa depicts the *caṇḍāla* in the following strain : "with blue complexion, blue robes, dishevelled locks, garlanded from the crematory, anointed with ashes from the same and adorned with iron ornaments."

Appearance.

nīlavastradharo nīlaḥ paruṣo dhvastamūrddhajaḥ  
cityamālyāṃgarāgaśca āyasābharaṇo'bhavat (I. 58, 10f).

Manu also enjoins that the dress of the *caṇḍāla* should consist of the garments of the dead and that black iron should be their ornament (X. 51).

In the Mātanga Jātaka he is described as "clad in a bad under-garment of red colour round which a belt is tied ; above this a dirty upper garment, an earthen pot in hand" —rattadupattam nivāsetvā kāyabandhanam bandhitvā paṃsukulasaṃghātiṃ pārupitvā mattikāpattam ādāya...(IV. 379).

Manu also adds that he is "distinguished by marks at the king's command" (X. 55) Medhātithi understands these as external marks such as "axes, adzes and so forth used for executing criminals and carried on the shoulder." Govindarāja explains these as "sticks and so forth," Nārāyaṇa as "iron ornaments and peacock feathers and the like." But the more plausible is the explanation of Rāghavānanda, that they are to be branded on the forehead and on other parts of the body

To the *caṇḍālas* were assigned certain despised professions befitting their rank which they had to pursue hereditarily. The Arthasāstra fixes their habitat beside the crematorium

Arts and Professions.

1. Corpse-burner.

(pāṣaṇḍa-caṇḍālānām śmaśānānte vāśaḥ,

II. 4). Manu (X. 51) and Viṣṇu (XVI. 14) ordain that their clothes must be the mantles of the deceased. The occupation readily suggested by these injunctions is that of burning dead bodies. This was presumably not an independent profession but a compulsive service imposed on them by the state or society at large. Manu says : "In the daytime they may do the work assigned to them by order of the king ; the corpse of anybody who has no relations they must carry out of the house—such is the standing rule" (X. 55). According to the commentary on the Śīlavīmāṃsa Jātaka a *caṇḍāla* is engaged in removing corpses (*chavaḥaḍḍaka-caṇḍāla*, III. 195). He is certainly the corpse-burner (*chavadāhaka*) who tops the list of despised professions in *Milinda* (p. 331).

The cremation of unclaimed dead bodies and those of criminals seems to be an associate function of the equally disreputable job of an executioner. Manu says : "Criminals they shall kill according to the law, by order of the king ; the clothes of the criminals, their beds or other ornamental articles they may keep to themselves" (X. 56). Viṣṇu says "A *caṇḍāla* must live by executing criminals sentenced to death" (XVI. 11). In the *Anuśāsanaparva* his duty is that of the public executioner (48. 11),<sup>1</sup> In the *Arthasāstra* it is laid down that a *caṇḍāla* is to function for whipping a transgressing woman in the centre of the village

1 Cf. a Jātaka sketch of the *coraghātaka* : *aṭṭano cūrittena pharesuñña kaṇṭaka-kasañña ādāya kāsāyanivāsino rattamāladharo* (II. 41. 179). The *caṇḍālas* customarily wear a garland of red flowers (Jat. III. 30). Their dress and ornaments presumably were not uniform since, according to the *Smṛtis* they had them as they found them in corpses brought for cremation.

(III. 3) and for dragging an attempting suicide with a rope along the public road (IV. 7). The idea of employing a *caṇḍāla* for these purposes was to add an insult to the injury inflicted on the culprit.

The *caṇḍāla* is sometimes seen also in the despised role of a hunter. In the Śāntiparva, of the Hunter. Mahābhārata he is an animal-trapper in a

forest (138.23) and pursues his trade with a 'pack of dogs (138.114). In the Arthasāstra occurs a parable which conveys that a *caṇḍāla* usually profits by a fight between a dog and a pig (IX. 2). Manu assigns only dogs and donkeys as their wealth (X. 51). The profession of hunting is assigned to the caste known as *niṣāda* and the *caṇḍāla* is not commonly seen in this role. This may have been an occasional or additional calling. Or the term *caṇḍāla* may have been used in a more generic sense covering all pariahs and outcasts among whom the *niṣāda* or animal-killer was one. This is the more probable explanation as we come across other occupations of a *caṇḍāla* which do not fit in with a corpse-carrier or an executioner. One is found to earn living by selling fruits out of season but it should be remembered that he is a Bodhisatta (Jāt. IV. 200). Another is found mending old things (*jīṇṇapatisamkhāraṇaṃ karoti*, Jāt. V. 429). The phrase '*mūlavasyanavṛttinām*' used in Manu with reference to the occupation of a Sopāka *Caṇḍāla* is explained by Nārāyaṇa and Nandana as those who live by digging roots, i.e., in order to sell them as medicine. The *caṇḍāla* may appear with begging tray in hand (*kaṭopihattṥa*, An. IV. 375). In a Jātaka story a king is reduced to *caṇḍālahood* under the fury of his oppressed subjects (VI. 156). Evidently not the *caṇḍāla* caste but the general status of outcasts or degraded castes is meant.

The analysis of the phrase '*caṇḍāla-vamśa-ahopanam*' which occurs in the *Dīghanikāya* (I. i. 13) and in the *Cittasambhūta Jātaka* is illuminating. Acrobat and juggler. Rhys Davids renders it as 'acrobatic feats by *caṇḍālas*'; Rouse as 'the art of sweeping in the *caṇḍāla* breed' and Fick as 'the art of blowing a *Caṇḍāla* flute.' The annotation of Buddhaghosa in the *Sumangalavilāsinī* clarifies the cryptic expression. He treats the phrase as a compound of three separate things. '*Caṇḍāla*' means '*ayoguḷa-kīḷā*,'—a trick with an iron ball, '*vamśa*' is '*veṇuṃ ussāpetvā kīḷaṇaṃ*,' a trick with a bamboo pole (which is balanced on the juggler's forehead or throat while at the other end his pupil is poised. *Com. Sn.* 168), '*dhopanam*' is '*aṭṭhidhovanam*.' Here the scholiast refers to a barbarian custom in a certain *janapada* where corpses were not burnt but buried and, when decomposed, were dug out; the bones were washed and buried again with balms. The funeral rite was accompanied with drinking bouts and gusty wailings—He quotes a passage from the *Anguttaranikāya* (V. 216) where the custom called '*dhopanam*' is said to be prevailing in Southern India and hilariously observed with feasting, dancing, singing and merry-making. He adds significantly '*Idha ekacce pana indajālena aṭṭhidhovanam dhopanan ti vadanti.*'

Two things are apparent. Firstly, the custom certainly belongs to some aboriginal tribes particularly those inhabiting Southern India and presumably to the *caṇḍālas*. Secondly, '*dhopanam*' is a conjuring trick of bone-washing also presumably practised by the *caṇḍālas*. The ball-trick and the pole-trick may be acrobatic feats or sleights of hand. What is gathered is that the *caṇḍālas* practised various sorts of magical and acrobatic feats peculiar to their breed (*caṇḍāla-kammam*). They displayed their art in public

shows or on roadside which brought a few coppers from sight-seers.

The reference in the *Anguttaranikāya* to the custom prevailing in 'southern districts' weakens the comment of Fick that "the *caṇḍāla* village placed in the Citta-Sambhūta Jātaka in front of the gate of Ujjejn and thus to the west of India, may have probably existed only in the imagination of the narrator who carried the narrow conditions of his home over the whole of India."<sup>1</sup> There is nothing to show conclusively that the *caṇḍāla* caste was peculiar to the social organisation in Magadha and Vaṅga because their modern descendants are mostly located there and because Magadha and Videha are referred to by Manu as the land of mixed castes.

The *caṇḍāla* had to remain in strict isolation from civilised contact and at the bottom of the uncivilised society. "But (unlike all other castes) the residence of the *cāṇḍālas* should be outside the village"—so ordains Manu (X. 51). "*Caṇḍālas* must live out of the town.....In this their condition is different (from and lower than that of the other mixed castes)"—so lays down Viṣṇu (XVI. 14). "Endued with a dreadful disposition, he must live in the outskirts of cities and towns" (Mbh. XIII. 48. 1). In the Jātakas the *caṇḍālas* are always seen living outside the city gate (*bahinagare*, IV. 376, 390; VI. 156) in villages and settlements entirely by themselves (*mahācaṇḍālāgamako*, IV. 200; *caṇḍālāgama*, IV. 376, 390; *caṇḍālavāṭakam*, VI. 156). Fa-hien and Yuan Chwang corroborate the fact that they lived outside the city in their own villages. The latter adds

1 *Op.cit.*, p. 204.

that when they at all entered the municipal area, they had to travel along the left side of the road.

Elaborate rules of contact fortified the social partition. First and foremost, the rules of the table. The Brāhmaṇas of Kāsi who were thrown out of caste "having been made to taste the leavings of a caṇḍāla" (caṇḍālucchiṭṭhabhatta) for their life retired in shame to the kingdom of Mejjha (*mleccha*) and lived with the king of that country (Jāt. IV. 376ff). In Buddha's own words food earned by unlawful means "is like the leavings of a Caṇḍāla";—the following Jātaka story narrates how a Brāhmaṇa takes the leavings of a caṇḍāla under pressure of hunger but later awakes to the disgrace done to his birth, clan and family, vomits out the food with blood and retires into the forest to die forlorn (II. 82 ff). The Smṛtis prohibit touching a caṇḍāla by higher castes for which purification by bathing is necessary (Āpas. II. 1. 2. 8; Gaut. XIV. 30; Manu. V. 85; Vāś. XXIII. 33; Yāj. III. 30). Hence the wind and water that carry this contact is equally loathsome, Setaketu, the proud Brāhmaṇa pupil loathes the wind that brushes the body of a fellow caṇḍāla pupil (Jāt III. 233). Another Brāhmaṇa in whose locks gets stuck a tooth-stick nibbled by a caṇḍāla and carried by river current, reviles and curses the culprit and compels him to move and live downstream (IV. 376 ff; cf. Vin. IV. 203 ff). A parable in the Arthasāstra shows that "a reservoir of water belonging to caṇḍālas is serviceable only to caṇḍālas, but not to others....." (Yathā caṇḍālodapānāścaṇḍālānām-evopabhogyo nānyeṣām evamayam. I. 14). Even sight of and speech to them impurify (Manu, III. 239). Āpastamba says: "As it is sinful to touch a caṇḍāla so it is to speak to him or to look at him." (II. 1-2, 8). A merchant's daughter and a chieftain's daughter wash their eyes with

scented water and turn their back at the sight of *caṇḍālas* which brings bad luck. The two creatures are beaten to a jelly by the people who forfeited the expected distribution of free food and liquor due to the evil omen (IV. 376 ff, 390 ff).

It is sickening to narrate the multifarious disabilities thrust upon these people to square up their isolation and to

Social and economic disabilities. perpetuate their subjection and humiliation.

"A man who fulfils a religious duty should not seek intercourse with them ; their business they should conduct among themselves and their marriages they must contract with their equals. Their food must be given them by somebody other than an Aryan in a broken vessel ; at night they shall not go about in the villages or in the towns" (Manu, X. 52 f) A student of the Vedas shall not study in a village where *caṇḍālas* live nor if a *caṇḍāla* is within sight (Āpas 1. 3. 9. 15-17 ; Gaut. XVI. 19 ; Vās. XIII. 11). "If (while reciting the Vedas) they hear noises made by outcasts or *caṇḍālas*, they shall sit silent and fasting during three days" (Vās. XXIII. 34). They are debarred from standing as witness except in case of transactions in their own community (Arth. III. 11 ; Manu, VIII. 64 ; Nār. I. 155). For touching one of a higher order they are to be fined (Arth. III. 19 ; cf. III. 20). For stealing an animal of a *caṇḍāla* the thief is fined only half of the standing rate (IV. 10).

Nothing demonstrates more sharply the social status of a *caṇḍāla* than his very frequent classification with a dog (Āpas. II. 4. 9. 5 : Gaut. XVII. 24 ; Vās. XXIII. 33).

General Status.

A householder is to practise charity by throwing food outside the house on the ground for dogs, *caṇḍālas*, outcasts and crows (Vās. XI. 9 ; Manu, III. 92). In the Mahābhārata he stands in the company of cows, elephants, dogs, ravens and vultures (VI. 29. 13 ;

XII. 207, 42 ff). 'Manu extends the list to pig, cock, ass, camel and all sundry animals (III. 239 ; XII. 52). "Raven of ill omen" is the common form of address to him (Jāt. III. 233, IV. 388). But he was not really as well off as these companions. The wind and sight of these animals did not pollute an Ārya, nor were the sacred Vedas profaned at their hearing or by their presence. The *caṇḍāla* was lower than the dog and the crow. In the Smṛti literature the *caṇḍāla* is the lowest of all mortals (Manu, X. 16, 26).

In popular literature "contemptuous as a *caṇḍāla*" has become a proverbial expression. Into the mouth of a young lioness to whom a jackal had made a proposal of marriage the words are put—"This jackal is considered low and wretched among the four-footed animals, similar to a *caṇḍāla* (*hīno patikuṭṭho caṇḍālasadiso*, II. 6). A Brāhmaṇa designates his adulterous wife of a *pāpacaṇḍālī* (IV. 24 f).

The story of the Citta-Sambhūta Jātaka shows with pathetic clarity the mournful lot of these pariahs. Two *caṇḍāla* brothers living outside the city, display their simple arts outside the city gates. By accident and no fault of their own their loathsome sight is caught by two conceited women. They are mobbed almost to death. The thought comes to them,—“all this misery has come upon us because of our birth ; we are not allowed to pursue our own trade” (*caṇḍālakammaṃ kātuṃ na sakkhissāma*). They conceal their birth and go to study at Taxila. Here again they are exposed by their dialect (*caṇḍālabhāṣā*) and driven out with blows for their audacity of intruding into the knowledge which was the preserve of the upper classes. The story also demonstrates how complete the isolation was—the isolation imposed by all the ingenuity that the priesthood was capable of—that in the midst of a population speaking an Aryan

dialect they preserved even in linguistic matters their racial individuality."<sup>1</sup>

Was there no mitigation for the *caṇḍāla*? It is admitted that Śāstra rules do not reflect truly the actual conditions of society. But in this respect at least the popular stories of the Jātakas show that reality did not go very far from priestly theory. The few Jātaka stories that afford casual relief should be taken with some discount for the subject therein is always a Bodhisatta. In one case he dares to kick a fellow Brāhmaṇa pupil who is defeated in an academic dispute and the action is condoned by the teacher (III. 233). We have seen that the *caṇḍāla* was not at all admitted to the courses of learning. Elsewhere he is served by a Brāhmaṇa for a charm and the Bodhisatta motive comes out in the open when the latter loses it from denying his *caṇḍāla* teacher out of shame. The fitting conclusion is the sermon by a king that a teacher is always to be respected be he a Sudda, Caṇḍāla or Pukkusa (IV. 200 ff). In another story a *caṇḍāla* who is maltreated by a merchant's daughter, lies down in fast for six days at the merchant's doors, obtains the girl for wife and compels her to carry him on her back to his village (IV. 36).<sup>2</sup> Every available testimony goes to show that the fellow would have been flayed or lynched no less than a Negro who would show the same temerity with a Yankee woman a few years ago.

In a discourse to the Brāhmaṇa Aggikabhāradvāja Gotama cites the instance of Mātanga,<sup>3</sup> a *cāṇḍāla* who reached

1 Fick : *Op. cit.*, p. 205.

2 The apology is expressly given.—“For the resolve of such a man (Bodhisatta)—so it is said, always succeeds,”

3 Cf. Jātaka IV. 376ff; Manu, II. 14. 46.

the highest fame and went to the Brahmaḥloka while many high-bred Brāhmaṇas, owing to their sinful deeds, are blamed in this world and go to hell after death. Hence not by birth is one a pariah or a Brāhmaṇa, by act one is a pariah or a Brāhmaṇa (Sut. V. 138. 142).

Na jaccā vasalo hoti  
Na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo  
Kammanā vasalo hoti  
Kammanā hoti brāhmaṇo

But why had he to fall back upon the next world to vouchsafe reward or punishment? The brutal level to which these people were kept precluded any question of their admittance to the centres of learning and enlightenment. The platitudes of the Suttas go down before the hard facts revealed in the Jātaka stories. Of physical tyranny and economic subjection of class by class, history has abundant instances. But it is doubtful whether to the segregation and soul-killing device innovated by the Ārya for a caṇḍāla there is any parallel.

## II. The Pukkusa

Nothing can be definitely said about the origin or the occupation of these people. Even their Origin. name is subjected to a wide range of variants. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad has Paulkasa, the Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā spells as Puklaka or Pulkaka (1. 6 11), the Vājasaneyi Saṃhitā as Paulkāsa (XXX. 17). The Arthaśāstra gives Pulkasa. In the Smṛtis they appear as Pukkasa while the Pali form is Pukkusa consistently. Like the caṇḍāla the *pukkasa* of the Smṛtis is a mixed caste, but opinions differ about his descent. The Artha-

śāstra says that he is the issue of a *niṣāda* on an *ugra* woman (III. 7), Manu (X. 18) and Bodhāyana (I. 8. 11), on a Śūdra woman. According to Viṣṇu (XVI. 5) and Vasiṣṭha (XVIII. 5) he is born of a Kṣatriya woman by a Vaiśya father ; according to Gautama (IV. 19), by a Śūdra father.

Viṣṇu ordains that the *pukkasa* must live by hunting (XVI. 9). Manu assigns him "catching and killing of animals living in holes" along with two other mixed castes, viz., *kṣattrys* and *ugras* (X. 49). In the Pali literature he appears in an altogether different role. The commentary on the *Sīlavimamsa Jātaka* explains him as one living by removing flowers (*pupphachaddaka-pukkusa*, III. 195). The *pupphachaddaka* also appears in the *Milinda* in a circle of despised castes and professions (p. 331). In the *Theragāthā* his occupation appears to be the removing of faded flowers from temples and palaces. Fick is thus led to state : "I don't believe that the Pukkusas were a special professional class but a race that lived generally by hunting and only occasionally by dirty work, like cleaning temples and palaces."<sup>1</sup> Dhammapāla's commentary, however, throws more light on his functions. Thera Sunīta born as a *pupphachaddaka*, earned his living as a street-sweeper, not making enough to kill his hunger. In early dawn he cleared the street of Rājagaha, collecting scraps, rubbish and so on into heaps, and filling therewith the baskets he carried on a yoke.

1 *Op. cit.*, p. 206. On the *pukkusa* Rhys Davids says in the Pali commentary, — "name of a (non-Aryan) tribe, hence designation of a low social class, the members of which are said (in the Jātakas) to earn their living by means of refuse-clearing."

Whatever their origin and profession, one thing remains certain,—that they were a despised race whose lot was almost as bad as that of the *caṇḍāla*. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upahiṣad paṭkasa* is the name of a despised race of men along with the *caṇḍāla* (IV. 3. 22). In *Manu* (XII. 55) and in the *Yājñavalkya* (III. 20) they are classed with *caṇḍālas* and various breeds of animals as creatures in whose wombs a *Brāhmaṇicide* is born. In the *Anuśāsanaparva* they are the progeny of the *caṇḍālas*, eat the flesh of asses, horses and elephants, and just like the *caṇḍālas* wear clothes procured by stripping human corpses and eat off broken earthenware (48. 24). In the *Jātakas* they are very commonly bracketted with the *caṇḍālas*. Like that of their bedfellows their sight was unseemly. Elder *Sunīta* plied his trade in early dawn obviously to escape sight. When *Buddha* was approaching with his train,\* finding no place to hide in on the road, he placed his yoke in a bend of the wall and stood as if stuck to the wall. He speaks of himself in the *Theragāthā*: “Of low family am I, I was poor and needy. Low was the work I did, namely that of removing faded flowers. I was despised by man, held in low esteem and reproved.”<sup>1</sup>

Nīce kulamhi jāto 'ham daḷiddo appabhojano ;  
hīnam kammaṃ mamaṃ āsi, ahoṣiṃ pupphachaḍḍako,  
620.

jigucchito manussānaṃ paribhūto ca vambhito  
nīcam manam karitvāna vandissam bahukam janam, 621.

1 Cf. Oldenberg ; *Buddha*, p. 159.

### III. The *Niṣāda*

According to the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Dharmaśāstras*, the *niṣāda* is the offspring of a *Brāhmaṇa* on a *Śūdra* woman. Fick groups him like the *caṇḍāla* and the *pukkusa* among the "ethnic castes" held together by a common race. The derivation of the word (*ni*—down, *sad*—settle) indicates those who have settled down, i.e., the settled aboriginals.<sup>1</sup> As pointed out by Macdonell and Keith,<sup>2</sup> this view of Weber is supported by the fact that the ritual of the *Viśvajit* sacrifice requires a temporary residence with *niṣādas*, for the *niṣādas* who would permit an Aryan to reside temporarily amongst them, must have been partially amenable to Aryan influence. But the name appears in early Vedic literature also as a general term for the non-Aryan tribes outside the Aryan organisation like the *Śūdras*; for Aupamanyava (*Yāska*: *Nirukta*, iii. 8) took the five peoples (*pañca janāḥ*) to be the four castes (*catvāra varṇāḥ*) and the *niṣādas* and the commentator *Mahīdhara* explains the word where it occurs in the *Vājasaneyi-Saṃhitā* as meaning a *Bhilla* or *Bhil* (XVI. 27; cf. XXX. 8).

Apparently, the *niṣādas* like the *caṇḍālas* were originally a tribal group that lived mainly by hunting and fishing, the professions which represent the lowest stage of human culture. In India these bore the additional stigma of killing living beings.<sup>3</sup>

1 Rhys Davids gives in *Pali Dictionary* 'one who lies in wait.'

2 *Vedic Index*.

3 *Dṛṣṭaḥ sarvalokeṣu niṣādatvaṃ gamiṣyati*  
*Prāṇātipātānirato nireṇukrośatām gataḥ.*

\* , Rām. I, 59, 21.

This stigma and the consequent isolation retarded racial admixture and these people retained their tribal characteristic within the Aryan structure. In the Pali and Sanskrit literature we hear not only of villages and settlements but also of states, kings and armies of *niṣādas*. The legal definition of their origin however shows that the racial isolation gradually slackened under the stress of material circumstances. A Brāhmaṇa youth adopts the occupation of a hunter when he cannot maintain himself by any other art and dwells in a border village or outside city gate (Jāt. II. 200 ; VI. 170). Among the ten callings of a straying Brāhmaṇa appears the hunter's (IV. 361ff). The profession followed by the entire branch of a low race took the shape of a caste when it was reinforced by infiltration from higher caste-orders.

It is not to be supposed that the profession of animal-killing was confined to a specific tribe or caste or that all those who took to it received the stamp of a specific caste-denomination called the *niṣāda*. Hunter *par excellence*. •  
Manu assigns slaughter of wild animals to the mixed castes of Medas, Andhras, Cuñicus and Madgas, of cave-dwelling animals to Pukkusas, Kṣattṛs and Ugras while reserving killing of fish to Niṣādas (X. 48f). Elsewhere snaring animals is attributed as a supplementary occupation to the mixed caste of Sairandhṛa (X. 32). Megasthenes' fourth class of population consists of aboriginal herdsmen and hunters—"those who alone are allowed to kill animals," representing a professional class rather than a tribal or caste group. What may be inferred is that these professions were pursued more or less by all aboriginals although the *niṣāda* tribes were hunters *par excellence*, so much so that a professional hunter came to be called a *niṣāda* in popular parlance whatever his tribal origin.

The strictly professional name as distinguished from the racial is 'luḍḍaka' for hunter and Luḍḍaka and Kevaṭṭa. 'kevaṭṭa' (Sans. *kaivarta*) for the fisherman or boatman. In the Pali works we come across the *vattakaluḍḍako* (Jāt. I. 208, 434 ; II. 113), the *godhaluḍḍako* (I. 488 ; III. 107), the *tittiraluḍḍako* (III. 64), the *migaluḍḍako* (II. 153 ; III. 49, 170, 185) according as the hunter or fowler specialised in stalking a particular beast or bird and purveyed its flesh. *Kaivarta* likewise seems to be a professional and not a tribal name. It does not appear in the Smṛti lists of mixed castes. According to the nomenclature of Manu the caste name corresponding to the fishing profession is *mārgava* or *dāsa* begotten by a *niṣāda* on an *āyogava* woman (another mixed caste) and "subsisting by working as a boatman whom the inhabitants of Āryāvarta call a *kaivarta*" (X. 34). The *niṣāda* king Guha is seen ready with his flotilla of 500 boats and hundreds of *kaivarta* soldiers in anticipation of Bharata's hostility to Rāma (Rām. II. 84. 8). Within the profession of *niṣāda*, fishing appears as 'a matter of course, as much as hunting (Mbh. I. 28 ; Jāt. VI. 71f).

As these people excelled in bagging the different species of the four-footed, feathered and finny Arts and Appliances. races, their arts, appliances and accomplices differed accordingly. The quail-trapper nets quails by gathering the birds with the imitation of the note of a quail (Jāt. I. 208, 434 ; II. 113) and the partridge-catcher snares his preys by means of a decoy bird (III. 64).<sup>1</sup> The iguana-trapper goes to the forest to dig out iguanas with spades and dogs (*godhābīlaṃ bhindanattāya kuddālaṃ gahetva suna-*

<sup>1</sup> Just like his modern prototype. The Santhals, Kols and other aborigines still catch partridges and doves by the same artifices.

khehi saddhim araññaṃ pāvisi. I. 488). The deer-stalker marks the whereabouts of deer from their foot-prints traced from the water-place, sets the toils (mīgaluḍḍako vaddhamayaṃ pāsaṃ oḍḍetvā agamāsi, II. 153) and bags his victim with sword and spear (asiṇ ca sattiṇ ca, III. 185). Bows and arrows instead of the snare and the sword or spear were also used (II. 200). For fishing purposes, nets were the commonest instruments while the line (bālīsiko bālīsena maccha uddharati. Mil. 412; cf. Jāt. I. 482; Sn. II. 225f) and the wicker-cage (kumināni, Jāt. I. 427) set in pits and holes of rivers (nadīkandarādisu, II. 238) were also in use. It is not always however that the *neṣāda* specialised in killing a particular animal and very often all manners of birds, beasts and fishes came within his pursuit (II. 200; VI. 71f., 170).

The professional hunter of course sells his bag,—beast, bird or fish to the market place in the adjoining city. He may have a modest catch that can be carried on a pole (VI. 170) or there may be a windfall so that he drives a cart-load of venison (III. 49). The hunters probably disposed of their booty to the retailers who ran stalls of different varieties of flesh in the market place.<sup>1</sup> There were also people who did not dispose of their prize but lived upon them direct. "Certain men of the marches (of Benares) used to make a settlement wherever they could best find their food, dwelling in the forest, and killing for meat for themselves and their families the game which abounded there" (IV. 289). This is reminiscent of the accounts of Diodorus and

1 Goghātako, orobbhiko, sūkariko, māghaviko, sūkuntiko, etc. are butchers in different varieties of flesh and not keepers or hunters of different animals.

Arrian on the wild nomadic tribes who lived on chase outside human dwellings. As the conquerors appropriated land of the superior grade, the more conservative of the original settlers withdrew to the marches where land offered little attraction to the tiller. Hunting, animal-keeping and free-booting became the occupation of these Bohemians. They were less amenable to Aryan culture and, consequently accorded a more dishonourable status than their more settled compatriots.

It is not possible with available data to fix the geographical regions where the hunting and fishing folk were mainly located. Probably they were scattered all over the country, generally grouped in their own villages, situated outside the borders of cities as usual with other despised professions and castes, and generally fitted in a structure of communal economy. They are referred to as plying their nets jointly and as being obedient to one another's bidding (*anyonyavaśavarttinaḥ*, Mbh. XIII. 50). Elder Yasoja was born at the gate of the city of Sāvatti in a fishers' village, as the son of the headman of the 500 fishermen's families who fished together in the river Aciravatī (Therag. 243ff). The anglers (*bāḷisikā*) in another village are in the habit of sharing their prize as it appears from a ruse planned by one of them who had a snag in his tackle and took it to be a big fish :

*puttakam mātu santikam desetvā paṭivissakehi saddhim kalaham kārāpemi, evaṃ ito na koci koṭṭhāsam paccāsim-sissati* (Jāt. I. 482).

Elder Losaka Tissa was born in a fishing village of a thousand families (*kulasahassavāse kevaṭṭagāme*) in Kosala of which the 1,000 heads went together to fish in river and pool (I. 234). Elsewhere fishing *niṣādas* are found to live in a remote region in the midst of the ocean (*samudrakukāḥ-*

vekānte niṣādālayamuttamam, Mbh. I. 28). The fishing tribes of the western countries brought tribute to Yudhiṣṭhira (II. 32. 10). In a Jātaka story are found two villages of hunters near Benares on the two banks of a river each with a chief over its 500 families (VI. 71f). A *niṣadagāma* near Benares is very common reference (II. 36; IV. 413; V. 337; Therīg. Com. 291ff) and such villages are seen as early as in the Lāṭyāyana Śrauta Sūtra (VIII. 2. 8).

Von Schroeder suggests identification of *niṣādas* with Nysaeans who, according to the Greek memoirs sent an embassy to Alexander when he was in the land of the Aśvakas.<sup>1</sup> The identification however is doubtful. Varāhamihira recognises a kingdom (*rāṣṭra*) of the *niṣādas* in the south-east of the Madhyadeśa (Br. Sam. XIV. 10). Guha's principality was situated on the banks of the Ganges beyond Kośala with the city of Śrngavera (Rām. II. 50; 83. 19).

The *niṣāda* was despised both for his profession and for his birth. His was a despicable pursuit  
 Social position (uddācāra khuddācārā'ti, Dn. XXVII. 25).

That animal-killing was stigmatised is evident throughout the Jātakas. It is among the ten pursuits of straying Brāhmaṇas. A king asks a hunter to give up his calling and adopt agriculture, trade and usury (IV 422). A seṭṭhi's son also dissuades a *luḍḍaka* from his profession (III. 51). It is given that these ill-behaved people (*dussīlānaṃ miga-luḍḍaka-macchabandhādīnaṃ*) receive but do not follow the law (III. 170). In the Mahābhārata a long tribute is paid by Śakra to the *niṣāda* king Nala who is well-versed in all duties, conducts himself always with rectitude, has studied the Vedas. . . , leads a life of harmlessness unto all creatures,

is truth-telling and firm in his vows and in his house the gods are ever gratified by sacrifices held according to the ordinance. In that tiger among men—that king resembling a *lokapāla* in truth, forbearance, knowledge, asceticism, purity, self-control and perfect tranquility of soul. . .” and so on (III. 58. 8-11). According to the Brāhmanical rules, a Śūdra is not allowed to read the Vedas nor to perform sacrifices, not to speak of a *niṣāda*. The picture is unreal and the encomiums may not be taken to suggest that a *niṣāda* who gave up his trade was promoted from his order to higher ranks.

A more realistic account is that of the *niṣāda* king Guha who claims Rāma's friendship and is embraced by the latter. But neither Rāma nor Bharata accepted the food offered by him. Unlike the Vānara and the Rākṣasa allies, this *niṣāda* king does not figure in the sacrificial rites and public jubilations held after Rāma's return from exile to Ayodhyā. The *niṣāda* was a despised creature, both by birth and profession, and stood just above the *caṇḍāla* and the *pukkusa* in the scale of social gradation.

#### IV. The Veṇa

Like the *nesāda*, the *veṇa* and the *rathakāra* were according to Rhys Davids “aboriginal Professional castes. tribes who were hereditary craftsmen in these crafts.”<sup>1</sup> Fick describes them as “professional castes” or “non-Aryan races who, although they stood on a higher culture-level than the hunting and fishing races, engaged in branches of profession the practice of which presupposed no acquaintance with metals and their employment and were

therefore held in low esteem by the Aryans who worked with iron instruments.”<sup>1</sup> The Aryans advancing along the Gangetic plains gave the original settlers names after the material with which they worked. Thus the ‘bamboo-worker’ and the ‘carriage-builder’ became names of tribes or castes (jāti).

The *veṇa*, literally, is one working with bamboo reeds.

Degradation. In the Vedas, *veṇu* is mentioned as a reed of bamboo; but *veṇa*, *vaiṇa* or *veṇukāra* are not seen.<sup>2</sup> Apart from the Pali passages referred to above, the *veṇa* appears at the end of the Milinda list of crafts and professions along with the *chavadāhaka*, *pupphachaddaka* and *nesāda*. In a Jātaka verse the *veṇī* is bracketed with the *caṇḍālā* (sic) as a term of rebuke (V. 306). The *veṇukāra* or *velukāra* who goes into the forest with his knife to collect a bundle for his trade (Jāt. IV. 251) is probably another name of the same “functional caste” who ranks in the conventional fashion along with the *caṇḍālā*, *pukkusa* and *rathakāra* in the Lalita Vistara as *hīṇakula* in which a Bodhisatta is not reborn (Ch. III).

The tribal craft of these people was working with reeds. i.e., basket-making and flute-making. Dhammapāla explains them as a caste working on willows and reeds (*veṇim vā ti veṇajātikā vilīvakāra-naḷakārā*, PvA, p. 175). The Jātaka commentary on *veṇī* (V. 306) explains it by *tacchikā*,—a carpenter’s widow.<sup>3</sup> Probably the original bamboo-working race was not always rigidly identified with

1 Op. cit., p. 208.

2 In the Arthashastra, the *vaiṇa* is the issue of an Ambaṣṭha on a Valdehaka woman (III. 7).

3 Thus one despised caste is explained by means of another. In the Vedic literature the *takṣaka* or joiner appears in a low role.

its profession. Manu defines the function of the *veṇa* as playing drums (X. 49) while the craft of making baskets and other things with cleft bamboos is ascribed to the *pāṇḍusaupaka* caste originating from the *caṇḍāla* (Mbh. XIII. 48. 26 ; cf. Manu, X. 37).

### V. The Rathakāra

The *rathakāra* or chariot-maker is in the Atharvaveda one of those subject to the king (III. 5. 6) apparently standing as an example of the industrial population. It appears definitely as a caste-name in the Yajurveda Saṃhitās (Kāṭh. XVII. 13 ; Mait. II. p. 5 ; Vāj. XVI. 17, XXX. 6) and in the Brāhmaṇas (Tait. I. 1. 4. 8 ; III. 4. 2. 1 ; Śat. XIII. 4. 2. 17). In the Yājñavalkya he is the progeny of a *māhiṣya* (Kṣatriya father and Vaiśya mother) and a *karaṇī* (Vaiśya father and Śūdra mother). In later literature he is a caste below the Vaiśya but superior to the Śūdra.<sup>1</sup> He is a functional caste like the *taṣṣaka* and the *dhaivara*, the carpenter and the fisherman respectively in the Vedic literature, held as inferior to the *ārya* orders. His further deterioration in social esteem is exhibited much later in the Pali texts quoted above. In the Khaṇḍahāla Jātaka he figures in a low series with the *pukkusa* and the *vesa* (VI. 142).<sup>2</sup>

1 Weber : *Indische Studien*, 10, 12, 13. Hillebrandt suggests that the Anu tribe formed the basis of this caste, referring to their worship of the Rbhus who are chariot-makers *par excellence*. *Vedische Mythologie*, 3, 152 f.

2. In the Arthaśāstra, the *rathakāra*'s is a profession prescribed for the mixed caste of Vaiśya (III. 7), but in the previous chapter it is a caste-name.

This *rathakāra* 'whose very appellation indicates the Craft: chariot build- function of chariot-building, became ing and leather-work, associated in course of time with a new craft, that of working on leather. Probably this transformation from a comparatively less to a more disresponsible pursuit took place in the Gangetic regions and probably this also explains the consequent deterioration in social status of the caste as seen in Pali literature. In the Majjhima the artisan who is shaping an axle of a chariot (*rathassa nemim*) is not a *rathakāra* but a *yānakāra* (I. 5). In the Jātaka verses the metaphor occurs twice,—“just as the *rathakāra* cuts the shoe according to the skin” (*rathakāro va cammassa parikantaṃ upāhanaṃ*, IV. 172 ; *rathakāro va parikantaṃ upāhanaṃ*, VI. 51). In the first, the commentary explains *rathakāra* as *cammakara*. The commentary on the Petavatthu also explains *rathakārin* as *cammakārin* (III. 1. 13). But certainly there was no complete overlapping of the two crafts in the same caste. for the *cāmmakāra* and the *rathakāra* are both mentioned side by side in the Milinda list referred to above.<sup>1</sup>

That the two were not identified is also proved by the enumeration of the *cammakārasippaṃ* Social status. among the set of despised callings cited in contradistinction from the despised castes. The occupation of a cobbler was held disreputable in all quarters. Manu assigns working in leather to the mixed castes of *kārāvāra* and *dhigvaṇa* (X. 36. 49) : this *kārāvāra* again, is said to be

1 Cowell and Rouse find a puzzle in this dual function of the Rathakāra and take refuge in the suggestion that he might be the worker of wooden shoes.

2 According to Manu however, by a *niṣāda* man on a *vaidika* woman.

begotten by a *carmakāra* on a *niṣāda* woman (Mbh. XIII. 48. 26).<sup>2</sup> Food offered by the shoe-maker is not to be taken by a Brāhmaṇa (Mbh. XII. 37. 31). Even trading in iron and leather is censurable (*vikrayaṃ lohacāmaṇaḥ*, XII. 295. 5 f).

The leather-worker's was a developed art. He did not make shoes only. He prepared Workmanship. leather-sack holding a hogshead's weight (*kumbhakara-gāhikaṃ cammabhastam*),<sup>1</sup> leather ropes and straps, shoes "big enough for an elephant," and leather parachute (*cammachatta*) by means of which a hunter flies down a mountain (Jāt. V. 45 f). He worked shields of 100 layers, of superb workmanship (*phalasatam*<sup>2</sup> *cammaṃ hontimantī-suniṭṭhitaṃ*, VI. 454). He is among the eighteen *senis* of artisans who build a king's dwellings in Uttarapañcāla (VI. 427).

The conventional Pali list does not certainly exhaust the medley of castes and tribes who Inferior races. either because of their race or for low occupations remained outside the pale of the Aryan culture. Under the general brand of *mleccha* passed the procession of indigenous and foreign barbarians in the Epics,—the Pahlavas, Śakas, Yavanas, Kāmbojas, Kirātas, Cīnas, Hūṇas and so forth. Sinful races, who act like *caṇḍālas*, ravens and vultures are Andhakas, Guhas, Pulindas, Śavaras, Cucukas and Madrakas in the South and Yaunas, Kāmbojas, Gandhāras and Kirātas in the North (Mbh. XII. 207. 42 ff). The Yonas, Kāmbojas and Gandhāras settled in the North-West Frontier

1 Cf. the *cammamāluka* or the leather sack used to carry earth dug out of a tunnel (Jāt. VI. 432).

2 *Phalasatappamaṇaṃ bahukhāre khādāpetva mudubhāvaṃ upanīta-cammaṃ*,—Com.

Province. Among the Yona, the Brāhmaṇa and Śramaṇa had no foothold in Aśoka's time (R.E., V.). Among them and the Kāmbojas, it is said in the Majjhima, there were only two castes, *ārya* and *dāsa* (d'eva vaṇṇā ayyo c'eva dāso ca) and where a *dāsa* can be an *ārya* and an *ārya* a *dāsa* (93). The Andhras occupied the land beyond the Godavari,—the southern part of the Central Provinces and Nizam's dominions. The Pulindas, though scattered over many provinces appear mainly in the north and north-east of the Andhras (R. E. XIII).<sup>1</sup> The Ābhīras who earned notoriety as a tribe of robbers (Rām. VI. 22. 30 f) infested the western coast south of Gujarat.

In the Arthaśāstra, the *mlecchas* figure as savage, barbarian tribes inhabiting the frontiers (VII. 10, 14; XII. 4). They are associated with criminals (XIII. 5) and the sardonic author finds in them a good recruiting ground for spies and agents provocateurs (I. 12. XIV. 1)

To Megasthenes some of these tribes were reported as pigmies waging war with cranes and partridges; to the author of the Periplus they are savage and cannibal races—the Cirrhadoe the Bargysi, the Horse-faces and Long-faces who inhabited the North or the Himalayan valleys.

Apart from these, the Smṛtis enumerate as many as fifteen mixed castes (*apasada*) ascribing some particular infamous occupation to each of them. The elaborate regulations on these mixed castes and their unmitigated denunciation would not have been necessary unless there was a real menace to the purity of the Aryan stock from connubial relations with non-Aryan tribes. Racial admixture was laid under the strictest inter-

1 D. R. Bhandarkar: *Aśoka*.

dict and the progeny of the violation of Aryan blood, relegated to all sorts of impure crafts and callings, were debased into the lowest stratum of social conformation.

Generally, the *mleccha* and the *hīnajāti* lived in their own settlements outside the Aryan society. Their services were necessary but their presence was contaminating. Buddha opened the door of the *saṃgha* to them.

## CHAPTER IV

### DESPISED CRAFTS AND CALLINGS

The *hīnasippa*. (1) Basket-maker (2) Cobbler (3) Potter (4) Weaver (5) Barber (6) Acrobat (7) Snake-charmer (8) Snake-doctor (9) Physician (10) Miscellaneous (11) Vagrancy.

The Suttavibhanga Pācittiya enumerates the five low occupations as distinct from the five low castes :

Hīnam nāma sippaṃ naḷakārasippaṃ kumbhakārasippaṃ pesakārasippaṃ cammakārasippaṃ nahāpitasippaṃ tesu tesu va pana janapadesu oññātaṃ avaññātaṃ hīlitaṃ paribhutaṃ acittikataṃ; etaṃ hīnaṃ nāma sippaṃ. II. 2. 1.

It would seem that for those who made their living by these trades there was no hard and fast line determined by birth. But on the other hand the tendency is very clear for the son to follow the father's craft. The association thus begun and the stigma laid on these crafts resulted in the course of centuries in complete identification of the craft with birth and the crystallisation of thorough-going and hide-bound castes on the basis of particular professions.

#### 1. The Basket-maker and 2. The Leather-worker

That caste and profession were fast converging and assuming a common border-line is clearly understood from the enumeration of the *naḷakāra* and the *cammakāra* among the crafts after the *veṇa* and *rathakāra* are cited to illustrate caste groups. We have seen the annotator explain *veṇa* as *naḷakāra* ( PvA.p. 175 ). The *naḷakāra* works with *veṇu*

or reeds.<sup>1</sup> So the *rathakāra* and the *cammakāra* are used in discriminately to denote the leather-worker.

### 3. The Potter

The Potter made earthen pots with clay and the wheel just as in the present day in the villages of India (Jāt. III. 368 ; Sn. II. 83 ; Mbh. XI. 3. 11 ff). He made vases with various artistic designs painted on them (Jāt. V. 291). The son generally followed the father's trade (II. 79 ; III. 376) ; but the mention of the *antevāsi* and the *ācariyo* in connection with this and similar petty professions implies that these were not necessarily hereditary (Jāt. V, 290 f ; Dn. II. 88). The apprentice after learning the art from the master would certainly set up an establishment of his own or succeed to his master's.

The *kumbhakāra* is sometimes seen settled in villages outside city-gates (Jāt. III. 376, 508). But he does not generally appear in very dark colours. The potter Ghaṭikāra is a bosom friend (*piyasahāyo*) to the Brāhmaṇa Jotipāla, so much so that the two go to bathe together and the former even pulls the latter by the locks as an appeal to go to see Kassapa (Mn. 81).

### 4. The Weaver

The weaver was the *pesakāra* or the *tantavāya* both of which were synonymous (Com. Vin. III. 259). Some sort of corporate life or guild organisation seems to have developed

1 Pitāputtā naḷakārā... . gangātīre veḷuṃ upadhārentā, Jāt. IV, 318 ; naḷakāra-jetṭhaka .. . puttēna saddhin gantvā taṃ veṇugumban chinditun ārabhi, DhP.A.I. 177. Cf. Prince Kusa who enlists himself as an apprentice to a naḷakāra serving a royal house, makes a palm-leaf fan (*tālavantam*) with paintings upon it ; Jāt. V. 291 f. ; basket-makers weaving a mat—naḷakārā kilāñjaṃ cinanti, II. 301.

among this profession. We hear of "weavers' quarter" (*tantavitataṭṭhānaṃ*) in a *nigamagāma* (Jāt. I. 356) and of "weavers' street" (*pesakāravithi*) outside a city (DhpA. I. 424). Four weavers in Benares would divide the proceeds of their trade into five shares, taking one each and giving away the fifth in common on charity (Jāt. IV. 475). In the *Petavattu* *Atthakathā* eleven *pesakāras* with a *jeṭṭhapesakāra* entertain a *bhikkhu* to cordial hospitality (pp. 42ff).

The *pesakāra* is loosely defined as a craft and as a *vaṇṇa* (DhpA. I. 428). He is presented with the *kappaka*, the *naḷakāra* and the *kumbhakāra* in a list of ordinary craftsmen (*puthusinggāyatanāni*) who maintain themselves and their parents and children and friends in happiness and comfort (Dn. II. 14). But his trade was not a lucrative one apparently because of the degradation of his race and craft (*lāmakakamma*, Jāt. I. 356). A weaver (*tantavāya*) dwelling outside city (*ḥahinagare*) who was spreading the threads (*tantam pasāreti*) while her daughter moved the shuttle (*tasaran vaḍḍheti*) even when he was caught with senile decay was considered the poorest man in the city by *Mahākassapa* (*ime mahallakakāle pi kammaṃ karonti, imasmin nagare imehi duggatatarā natthi manne*, DhpA. I. p. 424). A *sāmaṇera* (novice monk) who is in love with a weaver's daughter is thus questioned by her parents: "tvam amhe uccākulā ti sallakkhesi Mayan *pesakārā*, sakkhissasi *pesakārakamman kātun ti*?" The love-lorn monk gallantly retorts: "gihbhūto nāma *pesakārakamman vā kāreyya*, *naḷakārakamman vā*, kin iminā?" ; and he obtains the girl and adopts the weaver's trade (VbhA. 294 f).

### 5. The Barber

The barber (*nahāpita*, *kappaka*) used to do shaving, hair-dressing, cross-plaiting, shampooing, etc. (*massukaraṇa-*

kesauṭṭhāpana-aṭṭhapadaṭṭhapanādīni sabba kiccāni karoti, Jāt. II. 5). His was a definitely dishonourable status. A court-valuer sneaks at a king's miserly offer to his prognoses as a barber's gift (nahāpitādayo) and resigns (Jāt. IV. 137). A barber after becoming a *paccekabuddha* addresses the king, his late master by his family-name and the crowd is infuriated at such audacity on the part of a low-caste person whose occupation is clearing of dirt (hīnajacco malamajjano nahāpitaputto, III. 453 ; II. 452). A barber asks his son to give up his ambition for a Licchavi princess as *hīnajacca*. The contrast set forth at the introduction of a story which recounts a similar fancy of a jackal for a lioness significantly reveals the depraved status of a barber ; he is the same to a royal family as the jackal to a lion (II. 5).<sup>1</sup>

Was the barber's a more respectable calling in farther west from the Gangetic plains ? In the Milinda list of crafts and professions he stands in company with cooks, smiths, florists, bathers, etc.<sup>2</sup> This profession is not stigmatised in the law-books or in relevant passages of the Epics. A *Snātaka* is allowed food offered by a barber (Manu, IV. 253) but not by other artisans (214-20). Even to-day his position is not very dishonourable and he performs important functions in the family ceremonies of the upper orders.

#### 6. The Acrobat, Magician and Dancer

Acrobats, dancers and jugglers (*naṭa-nartaka*) form a class by themselves. Very often these arts were combined in the same persons. They entertained citizens in the *samājas*

1 The royal barber is occasionally seen in friendly intercourse with the employer (Jāt. I. 137 ; Vin. VII. 14).

2 Cf. Dn. II. 14.

or festive amusements (Rām. I. 18. 18 f; II. 6. 14; 67. 9ff) or roamed about exhibiting their skill (sippam dassento vicarati, Jāt. I. 430; māyaṃ vidhaṃseyya, Sn. III. 141) on the highroad.

Interesting specimens of this art are given. A man born in a jumper's family (laṃghana naṭaka yoniyā paṭi-sandhiṃ gahetvā) lived with his pupil on the display of his feat (laṃghanasippaṃ) which consisted in setting up a number of javelins in a row and dance through them (*ibid.*) Elsewhere two magician naṭas show their tricks. One of them conjures up a mango tree, climbs it and gets himself chopped to pieces by the slaves of Vessavana. His accomplices join the pieces together, pour water and bring him back to life. The other walks into fire with his troupe and comes out unscathed when the fire is burnt out (Jāt. IV. 324). Another conjurer swallows a sword 33 *angulas* long and of sharp edge, before a gathering (III. 338). The Arthaśāstra explains several magical tricks like fire-walking, fire in water, breaking of chains, acquirement of invisibility, etc., many of these in a sham manner (XIV. 2, 3).

These trades served as a wide channel for the wasting of the rich man's money. In the Sigālovada Sutta (Dn.) the six dangers at a *samajjā* are dancing, singing, music, recitations, conjuring tricks and acrobatic shows (*cf.* Dn. I. i. 13). A prodigal son squanders paternal wealth of 40 crores on drinking, gluttony and debauchery and on jumpers, runners, singers and dancers (laṃghanadhāvanagītanaccādīni, Jāt. II. 431). But it does not seem that this money went to the pocket of the struggling man who was half an artist and half a tramp and who is uniformly portrayed as a wretched and despicable creature. The poor jumper who kills himself in trying to clear five spears instead of four which was within his practice (Jāt. I. 430), the dancer who drinks himself to

death with all the earnings by his performance in a fête (III. 507), the impoverished family of acrobats (*naṭakakula*) reduced to begging (II. 167) are typical representatives of a class living a marginal existence. Presumably the rich gamblers betted in shows run by a parasitic set of people with professional jumpers and sprinters.

In the *Milinda* list of crafts, the *naṭaka*, *naccaka*, *laṃghaka*, *indajālika*, and *malla* come in a series on the wake of the *māṃsika* and the *majjika*, —the butcher and the brewer. Practice of dancing involves loss of caste (Manu, XI. 66). The professional dancer is among those from whom a Brāhmaṇa is not to take food (Mbh. XII. 37. 31). Viṣṇu assigns artistic performances like public wrestling and dancing to the *āyogava* caste generated by a Śūdra father on a Vaiśya mother (XVI. 8).

### 7. The Snake-charmer

Like the acrobat, the snake charmer showed his tricks (*ahiguṇḍike sippaṃ kīlāpenti*, Jāt. II. 429) in festivals (*ussava*) very often with a monkey in his party (II. 267 ; III. 198 ; IV. 308). His was a highly developed and well-cultivated art (*ahivijjā*, Dn. I. i 21). A Brāhmaṇa learns charms from a world-renowned teacher at Taxila and adopts the profession. He approaches a python (which is a Bodhisatta) with magical herbs and repeating magical spells (*dibbasodhāni gahetvā dibbamantaṃ parivattetvā*). The reptile feels its ears pierced as it were with burning splinters, its head as though broken by the blow of a sword (*kaṇṇesu tattasālākappavesanakālo viyo jāto, mattaho sikhareṇa abhimatthiyamāno viya jāto*). He spits upon it eating herbs and repeating charms and raises blisters in its body. The teeth are then broken by the same process and the body of the animal squeezed to weaken it

out.<sup>1</sup> Certain physical processes are applied on the serpent evidently for the purpose of wearing out its resistance which is then put into an osier-basket (*vallihi peḷam karitvā*).

The snake-charmer earns 1,000 *kahāpaṇas* by performance in a frontier village and sets out on his trade with a loaded cart and a pleasure-car (*Jāt. IV. 456 ff*). In the *Bhuridatta Jātaka* where a similar process of snake-catching is described and where also the snake is a Bodhisatta, the charmer by showing snake-dance in a single village makes a sum of 100,000 *kahāpaṇas*; people see with gold coin, gold, garments, ornaments and the like (*VI. 185f*). He comes to play his snake before the king "just bathed and anointed, and wearing a tunic of fine cloth, and making his attendant carry his jewelled basket" which is placed on a dappled rug (191).

The princely returns which only the feats of a Bodhisatta snake can account for and the position of an artisan performing before royal audience are not the real index of the standard of living of the class. Snake charming is one of the despicable callings taken up by degenerate *Brāhmaṇas* (*Dn. I. i. 19 ff*). The *āhiṇḍika* is among the mixed castes born of a *niṣāda* father and a *vaideha* mother (*Manu, X. 37*).

### 8. The Snake-doctor

Closely allied to the snake-charmer's was the profession of the snake-doctor for the two are sometimes seen combined

1 Technical languages are used in this connexion which are difficult to decipher. *Paṭṭakaveṇhanan nāma veṭhesi, tantamajjitan nāma majjiganuṭṭhe gahetvā dussapathiman nāma poṭhesi*. Cowell renders 'cloth wrap', 'rope-rubbing,' 'cotton blow.'

in the same person (Jāt. VI. 181). Venom-specialists who can cure snake-bite are a common reference in the Jātakas (III. 496 ; VI. 585). The means for extracting poison were simple and charms (osadehi ca mantehi ca) with which Bodhisatta, born in a family of snake-doctors (visavejjakule) used to practise (I. 310f ; V. 202). The very nature of the profession shows that it was not a lucrative one and the common standard is reflected in the doctor without practice in the village (dubbalovejjo gāme kiñci kammaṃ alabhitvā) who plays a trick on some boys to have them snake-bitten and then to cure them for a fee (III. 202). The infallibility of *mantas* was moreover doubtful. The *mantas* of the venom-specialist Brāhmaṇas prevented the snake Takṣaka from having direct access to king Parikṣit, but the success of his ruse is a sad commentary on their efficacy (Mbh. I. 42). And when Arrian quotes Nearchos that Indians can cure snake-bites where Greek physicians fail (15), it is not impossible that his authority was merely echoing the Indians' vaunting.

### 9. The Physician

The medical profession ranged from wide pharmacological knowledge to quackery and sorcery. Megasthenes observes both the sides of the picture. He speaks of physicians whose most esteemed remedies were ointments and plasters and who "effect cures rather by regulating diet than by the use of medicines." At the same time he notices "diviners and sorcerers.....who go about begging both in villages and towns" (Str. XV. i. 60).

The renowned Ayurvedic school at Taxila is a tribute to the development of medical knowledge. Jīvaka, the celebrated house-physician to the Magadha king Bimbisāra,

received his education there (Mv. VIII. 6). The ancient teachers of medicology (tikicchakānaṃ pubbakā ācariyā) are thus named : Nārada, Dhammantari (physician of the gods—specialist in snake-bite), Aṅgīrasa (versed in the charm of Atharvaveda against disease), Kapila, Kaṇḍaraggisāma, Atula and Pubba Kaccāyana (Mil., p. 272). The parable of an expert physician and surgeon (kusalo bhisakko sallakatto) who operates upon and treats a septic wound caused by weapon (Mil., pp. 110 ff; Mv. VI. 1 ff) or a boil (Mil., pp. 149, 353) or who can cure a leper in advanced stage or “give the blind man his eyes” (Mn. 75) exhibits an advanced knowledge of pharmacopœia. But as in all ancient culture groups, medical lore was vitiated with demonology and exorcism (bhūtavijjā, Dn. I. i. 21; bhūtavejjaṃ, Jāt. III. 511). In the introductory story of a Jātaka tale, even in the portion which is supposed to be later composition, a boy is advised to escape from a disease-infected house by digging a hole in the wall as the spirit of disease was supposed to guard the gate but not other parts of the house (II. 79). Belief in spirits was not the only limitation to the science. The Vijayasutta of the Suttanipāta exhibits some elementary knowledge of anatomy and ends by denouncing love for an impure thing like the human body (cf. An V 110). Here is perhaps a psychological factor which conduced to the relegation of pathology and surgery to the plebeian sciences.

The art of healing was stigmatised (Mbh. V. 38. 4; XIII. 135. 14). Not only is a Brāhmaṇa prohibited from dealing in medicinal herbs (Manu, X. 86-89; Gaut. VII. 9 ff; Āpas. I. 20. 12), he is not to take the food offered by the physician (Manu, IV. 211 ff; Āpas I. 6. 19 15; Mbh. XII. 37. 29 ff). Indra opposes the offering of Soma juice to the twin Aświns, for their profession had degraded them to the position of

servants (Mbh. III. 124. 12). Manu assigns medical practice to the mixed caste of Ambaṣṭhas (X. 47).

But however stigmatised, for a good practitioner it was not a poor profession, because people do spend for the impure filth of their body. By curing a patient Jīvaka gets 16,000 *kahāpaṇas* and a servant and a maid-servant (Mv. VIII. 13). For curing the chief *seṭṭhi* of Rājagaha, he charges a fee of 100,000 (*ib.* 20). Nor was his status a degraded one. Suśeṇa the state-physician of the *vānaras* of Kiṣkindhyā (Rām. VI. 101. 43) enjoyed presumably a quite respectable status. There appears to be an air of unreality in the unqualified damnation of the medical practice in the literature of the western districts; in the Gangetic provinces at least, the profession as such probably did not suffer under any stigma. The position of the practitioner depended on his practice as now and ever.

### Miscellaneous

The list given above is not exhaustive. In the Sānti-parva appearance in theatres (*raṅgāvatarāṇa*), disguising oneself in diverse forms (*rūpopajīvanam*), sale of liquor and meat (*madyamāṃsopajīvyāñca*) are among censured professions (295. 5f). A washerman, one who lives on the income of dancing girls (*raṅgastrījīvinām*), professional panegyrists and gamblers (*vandidyūtaavidām*) and singers and jesters (*hāsaka*) are among those whose food is forbidden to a Brāhmaṇa (37. 29ff). A Brāhmaṇa is prohibited from selling salt, cooked food, curds, milk, honey, oil, clarified butter, sesame, meat, fruit, roots, pot-herbs, dyed cloths, perfumery and treacle (Mbh. V. 38. 5). To live by purveying lac, honey,<sup>1</sup> meat<sup>1</sup> and poison is a curse (Rām. II. 75. 38). The

<sup>1</sup> Trade in honey and meat is censured also in Manu, III. 151 and in Jāt. IV. 361.

Smṛtis also give butchers, meat-sellers, killers and trappers of diverse animals, trainers of animals, makers of, and dealers in weapons, smiths, carpenters, weavers, dyers, oil-pressers, ploughmen, artisans, mechanics, architects, superintendents of workers in mines and factories, engineers, washermen, quacks, tailors, shopkeepers, publicans, police-officers, mace-bearers, astrologers, soothsayers, weather prophets, etc., (Manu III. 150, 63 ; IV. 84, 210-20 ; VIII. 65 f ; XI. 64 ; XII. 45 f ; Āpas. I. 6 14 ; Gaut. XVII. 17 ; Vāś. III. 3, XIV. 2 f ; Baudh. I. 5. 10. 24, II. 1. 2. 13 ; Nār. I. 178, 181, 183-85 ; Vṛ. XXII. 3 ; Viṣ. XXXVII. 22 f, 32. LI. 8, 10, 13-15 ; LXXXII. 7, 9). The stigma to some of these was only relative to the so-called religious caste while to others. i.e.. where the subject is disqualified as witness, it painted to an absolute standard by which the economic functions of society would be regulated.

The professions assigned in the law books to the so-called mixed castes were *ipse jure* infamous. Guardianship of the harem is the appropriate function of the Vaidehaka (Com. Manu, X. 47 ; Mbh. XIII. 48. 10)<sup>1</sup>. management of horses and chariots (Manu, X. 47 ; Viṣ. XVI. 13) or singing encomiums (Mbh. XIII. 48. 10) of the Sūta. The Āyogava is a carpenter (*ib.* 13) or net-maker (*ib.* 20). The Maireyaka manufactures wine and spirits (*ib.* 20).

Evidently no rigid and uniform classification prevailed. The Vinaya passage quoted at the beginning of the chapter indicates that besides the damned five there were other pursuits despised in other countries. Standards varied in countries and among communities. Jealousies and predilec-

1 According to Viṣṇu "keeping (dancing girls and other public) women and profiting by what they earn" (XVI. 12).

tions played their part in mutual estimation of races. What was honourable at some place might be dishonourable at another. The whole of half-Aryanised Magadha was low in the eyes of the dwellers in the land of Manu, of the high-browed and sneakish *udicca-brāhmaṇa* keenly sensitive of his pedigree. The Sākyas and the Kōliyas regarded each other as barbarous people pursuing customs opposed to their own sense of decency (Jāt. V. 412). There was, further, a host of artisan classes who filled a wide range of middle position in economic condition and social esteem—always however gravitating towards the bottom,—the smith, the carpenter, the garland-maker, the musician, the actor, the panegyrist, the buffoon, the drummer, the butcher, the brewer, the brothel-keeper and so on.

### *Vagrancy*

Below the great estates of wealth and honour, outside the labouring classes, the despised castes and the despised callings,—the vagrant or the professional beggar completes the social picture. There was no flooded mass of starving unemployed; and to many, beggary was a profitable business. Alms-giving being an acid test of piety, kings and merchants erected big charity-halls in the city wherefrom alms were distributed to thousands of people every day (Jāt. III. 129, 300, 414; IV. 15, 63, 176, 402; V. 383; VI. 97; Dn. XVII. i. 23). Professional beggars multiplied fruitfully under the shelter of indiscriminate charity and we hear of beggar families (*duggatakula*, Jāt. I. 238) as much as of an acrobat family or a wage-earning family. But the real problem of poverty was not solved, as it never can be, by private altruism. There were people with whom begging was the last trench in the battle for existence. With the

disruption of the primitive agricultural and pastoral economy, with the growth of cities and aggravation of famines, in days when men sold their freedom for food, there were many who remained outside the reach of the benevolent and wealthy. The Jātaka verse refers to "those who begged for need" (VI. 502)<sup>1</sup> and it is not an unexpected fate for a disinherited Brāhmaṇa boy, reduced to destitution and beggary, to die helpless on the street (V. 468 ; cf Therīg 122 ff).

1 The commentary goes : vanibbakajanesu kañci ekam pi yācakam mā vibhiṭṭhayittha,

## CHAPTER V

### . CLASS BASIS OF SOCIAL ECONOMY

The real India. Subjective character of canonical and court literature. Material for peoples' history. Comparative objectivity of popular literature.

Popular religion. Aboriginal fetishism. Aryan elemental gods. Symbolical gods. Growth of sects and rituals. Priesthood. Rise to wealth and power. Official and private bounties. Corruption. Regular and secular clergy.

Kings and military lords. Merchants. Economic background of Buddhist heresy.

Slaves and wage-earners. Economic determinism in social gradation. The pariah—his position *vis-a-vis* the Saṃgha. Social contrast.

Class compromise. Immaturity of class consciousness. Lower middle class the centre of gravity. Exploited elements a composite body. Ignorance and subjection of the Śūdra.

As the broad economic motives behind social and cultural growth are unfolded before our eyes, we bid fare to the India of magic and romance, the India resounding with Vedic hymns, Buddhist sermons and Epic Saga. The miracles wrought by the prophet, the carnivorous and the graminivorous living in fraternal embrace, the king forsaking *rāṣṭravijaya* for *dhammavijaya*, the *seṭṭhi* spurning his hoard like chaff and taking to *pabbajja*,—all melt in the horizon and we feel the hard ground of conflicts and struggles under our feet. We explore the economic content of India's great spiritual culture—production and distribution of wealth,

formation of classes thereon with interests essentially hostile beneath the external harmony of a priestly social philosophy.

To ascertain whether *artha* or *paramārtha* was the motive power of the cultural apparatus, it is necessary, first of all, to examine the nature of India's historical material. India produced no Thucydides or Tacitus. It yielded a plentiful crop of canonists and theoreticians to prescribe the divine law and write sacred texts. They formulated their social doctrines in tune with the Brahmanist scheme of society. Their sacred institutes and canonical literature represent only the Brāhmaṇist scheme of society and not society itself. It has been long proved by Western scholars like Senart,<sup>1</sup> Fick and others that Indian society was never founded on the fourfold functional caste—the *varṇāśrama*—as punctiliously laid down in the Smṛti and didactic literature. Brāhmaṇas are frequently seen to drive the plough, feeding themselves on pork, fowl and beef, living on usury or fighting even better than the so-called Kṣatriyas. The householder, instead of repairing to the forest at the age of fifty, is more often seen to cultivate the two middle *vargas*,—*artha* and *kāma*. A society which observes the priestly injunction that women are gates of hell cannot produce women like Ubhayabhārati and Maitreyī. The king who is sobriqueted *Ṣaḍbhāgin*—as the taker of only 1/6 of agricultural produce as taxes—is frequently seen ruining the cultivators with fleecing demands and no less is the same king who is extolled as a veritable god on earth seen to die

Subjectivity of  
canonical and court  
literature.

or leave his kingdom before the fury of his oppressed folk.

These social pictures are not found in the Brāhmaṇical sacred books. In fact India's history is not to be traced in these canonical works nor in the panegyrics of *praśastikāras* maintained by kings to blow their trumpet. Even foreign visitors like Megasthenes, Fahien and Yuan Chwang wrote under the influence of these religious motives or of king's court. The pulsating life of the endless mass of humanity that extended between the king's palace and the ascetic's *āśrama* is not felt in court or divine literature. The material for people's life is to be sought in peoples' literature. Fortunately much popular literature is not so wanting for us as genealogical and chronological tables and diplomatic and military records. Of course even this literature could not completely escape the tamperings of compilers with idealistic motives.

The remarkable difference between the canonical literature of Brāhmaṇas and that of the Buddhists is that the former's vehicle was a savant's language, the latter's vehicle was a more widely spoken language. Buddhist philosophy and practice exhibit some advance from Brāhmaṇism towards equality and democracy in their monastic organisation and theories of state. This explains why the Pali works give insight into popular life more than the Sanskrit. The social life of commoners in the countryside with their sorrows and pleasures, their feuds and fellowships expresses itself in colourful stories,—in rhymes and verses. These unmotivated, spontaneous effusions reflect clearly the beliefs, manners, customs and means of livelihood of the masses. The stories of the Jātakas are such folk-tales accumulated

Sources for Peoples' history.

Comparative objectivity of popular literature.

through centuries, in the lips of the commoner. They are presented by the compiler in a casual parenthetical manner only with the interpolation of the Bodhisatta motive. Sometimes this motive does not colour the incidents which have absolutely no bearing on the moral. The current of popular literature sometimes fade and dry, showed itself again in works like the *Pañcatantra*, *Hitopadeśa*, *Kathāsarit-sāgara*, etc. Even the *Purāṇas* and the great Epics sometimes afford glimpses into real human life beneath the crust of poetic artistry and idealisation.

With this literature as our sources we have to appraise the place of religion and the form of religion in the life of the masses. Every religious faith may be divided into two compartments—one is theology, the other rituals. Theology and philosophy is the concern of saints and logicians; the rites and rituals are the peoples' affair. As in any other country, in India also it is seen that in the early stages of corporate life, man, instead of bravely facing the ordeals of nature, lost his nerves before the unknown; from ignorance came fear, from fear propitiation and deification of the unknowable. Whatever was beyond the ken of knowledge and control became mystic and divine a ready answer to all queries was available in animism. The only escape from danger was fetish-worship. In stones, in animals, in trees, everywhere the aboriginal Indian tribes scented the existence of gods, demons and fairies ready to pounce upon the unwary.<sup>1</sup> Between these animal and totem

<sup>1</sup> Ample traces of these are available in the *Jātakas* and in South Indian literature and inscriptions.

divinities of the aboriginal non-Aryan tribes and elemental and astral divinities of the Aryans, there is not much difference. Indra, Agni, Pavana and Varuṇa are symbols of elemental forces beyond human control.

Aryan

The cultivator who had no mechanical devices to cope against the vagaries of the monsoons, fell to propitiating the god of the rains. Unable to grapple with the furies of fire man worshipped Rudra, to stop the onslaught of storms and floods the air-god and the water-god had to be appeased. The professional priest now stepped in to bank upon the superstitious veneration and fear of the people. Between the scared man and the remorseless god, he intervened with the much-needed charms and simples, magics and amulets. Gradually the original elemental gods—the brood of savage ignorance and folly,—were nursed into the brains of the intellectual to grow into full-fledged supernatural gods, each symbolising a particular virtue. Rudra, the fire-god became Śiva, hunting the crematorium—the ideal of sacrifice and renunciation. The rain-god became the king of gods—conqueror of demons, the symbol of order and righteous government. Kālī represented power; Viṣṇu love and preservation of life, the custodian of *elan vital*. These gods with their respective virtues became the stock-in-trade of different religious sects. The

Sectarianism and ritualism.

hostility among the Śaiva, Śākta, Vaiṣṇava and Saura were sedulously perpetuated by the man-god who stood between man and god. Rooted in the vested interests of the intermediary, popular religion spread new offshoots. A paraphernalia of rituals and ceremonies, distinctive marks of different sects,—hostility between the faithful and the unbeliever—were the crop of this new

development.<sup>1</sup> Thus popular rituals which at the beginning of economic struggle was confined to an instinctive devotion begotten of fear, ripened in the course of the rise of a new economic class into multifarious rites and practices, divisions and conflicts.

Of course the works of savants contained the gospel of unity within many, of concord of the divers, of godhead above the gods. But the riddles of theology or speculative knowledge are not our concern. We are concerned only with peoples' rites and peoples' religions which are the direct products of the struggle for existence,—not with that mystic core of religion which is reserved for the wise and the learned.

It is also admitted that there were sages who cast aside wealth and fortunes and spent their life to unravel the mysteries of the universe. The Priesthood. In ancient Egypt and Babylon and in Mediæval Europe we see the wealth of the nation accumulated in temples and churches and monasteries, that taking advantage of this wealth and human failings, the priest captured the supreme power of the state and to defend this 'divine' property against unbelieving and heretical interlopers, revelled in all sorts of intrigues, bloodshed and treason. It is true that the Indian picture is not blackened with such deplorable savagery practised in the name of religion. But even in this sacred cradle of spiritual culture, the worldly and secular priests far out-numbered the renouncing anchorite,—the *dhamma-dhvāja*, *kuṭajaṭila* and *kuhakatāpasa* grew like mushrooms all around (Jāt. I. 375 ; II. 406, 447, III. 137, 310, 541 ; Mbh. XII. 120.8, 158. 18 f ; Arth. I. 11).

1 Inscriptions down from the time of the Guptas and observations of the Chinese pilgrims show the multiplicity of sects and rituals which divided both the Buddhist and Brahmanical communities.

The treasure and garner of the monk swelled with the  
 Rise to wealth and power. produce of the *brahmadeya* and *devatras*  
 and such like property assigned to him  
 free of taxes. Everywhere Brāhmaṇas are seen enjoying  
 tax-free land to the extent of thousands of *kariṣas*, producing  
 food-crops by means of the ox and the plough and gangs of  
 slaves and serfs and living with the power and splendour of  
 kings.<sup>1</sup> Or sometimes the revenues of whole lots of villages  
 are assigned to the Brāhmaṇas by royal charter, the burden  
 of replenishing these gaps in the royal treasury falls on the  
 rest of the people. For this investment of public money  
 what returns society receives from the average Brāhmaṇa?  
 At most a few couplets of royal eulogy (Jāt. V. 23, 484),  
 the solution of a dream and interpretation of omens (Jāt. I.  
 272) or performance of costly sacrifices for the propitiation  
 of the gods. To the credulous he sold the privilege of  
 rendering homage to the person of a woman who was  
 believed to have borne a child to Brahmā (Jāt. IV. 378).  
 Wealth and social prestige gave him further powers in state  
 and society. The priest became the chief adviser to the  
 king in matters temporal and spiritual (*aṭṭhadhammānusā-*  
*saka*, Jāt. II. 105, 125, 173, 175, 203, 264; III. 21, 115, 206,  
 317, 337, 400, etc). Sometimes he made his office hereditary  
 (Jāt. I. 437). As the sole exponent of canon law he sat in  
 the hall of judgment and extended his power to the wider  
 regions of civil law—of *vyavahāra* and *vinicchaya* and not  
 infrequently traded with his judicial decisions (*laṅgakhādako*,  
*kuṭavinicchayiko*, Jāt. V. 1, 228; VI. 131). Sometimes he  
 flattered the conquering zeal of the king so that in the whole  
 of India “he will become the sole king and I the sole house-  
 priest” (*ekapurohita*, Jāt. III. 159). All the while the

1 Dn. III. 1, 1; IV. 1, 1; XII. 1, 1; XXIII. 1, Mn. 95,

recipient of *bhogagāmas* and *brahmadeyas* increasingly invested his wealth in commercial ventures or following the fourfold Vaiśya pursuit of agriculture, cattle-rearing, trade and usury grew into a multi-millionaire (*asitikotivibhavo*) capitalist interest and basked in the sun-shine of the court. His daily pension from the king amounted to 100, 500 or 1,000 *kahāpanas* (Mn. II. 163 ; Sn. I 82 ; Dhṛp. 204 Com.) He is seen in the role of great magnates sending 500 wagons from East to West (Jāt. IV. 7 : V. 471). He is seen to multiply his wealth sailing with cargo and slaves and servants to the Far Eastern Islands (Jāt. IV. 15 ; cf VI. 208). He is seen to function as king's treasurer (Jāt. I. 439 ; E. I. IX. 33 iii). As the cult of Mammon grew among the traders in religion, megalomaniac bounties became a fashion with their royal patrons and proteges.

The gifts of *brahmadeya* imposed by priesthood on Private and official temporal authority by cajoles and threats bounty. conduced to a rapid concentration of land in the hand of secular Brāhmaṇas<sup>1</sup> who are so prominent by their landed wealth in folk literature, although in didactic pieces cultivation of land is assigned exclusively to Vaiśyas. Private munificence vied with the royal. An early Brāhmī inscription in Mathura records a perpetual endowment by a lord out of the monthly interest whereof 100 Brāhmaṇas should be served daily (E. I. XXI. 10). From a single day's itinerary, a Brāhmaṇa begs sufficient money to buy slaves male and female (Jāt. III. 343).

Nor was the Buddhist *saṃgha* immune from the corrupting influences of gold. The Karle and Corruption and abuse. Nasik Cave Inscriptions show how the extravagant bounties of Śaka princes flowed indiscriminately

1 See *supra*, pp. 34f.

into permanent endowments to Brāhmaṇas and to the *saṃgha*. Kuṣāṇa inscriptions from Mathura tell the same story (E. I. XXI. 10). The Buddhist monasteries are so often found overflowing with gain and honour (*lābhasakkāra*) 'like five rivers' (Jāt. I. 449 ; II. 415 ; III. 126 ; Dh's Com. on Therīg. 92 ff), which undermine their ascetic purity (Mn. 76, 79). They maintained slaves and 'servants who begged alms on their behalf (Jāt. III. 49) or served as gardener or went on shopping errands.<sup>1</sup> Female slaves and dancing girls are seen in the Brāhmaṇical (E. I. XIII. 7A) and Jaina temples to serve or perform for gods and their mortal agencies. The superintendent of female temple-slaves enters into the list of temple officials (E. I. XIII. 7A). They "are frequently represented on the Buddhist monuments as exhibiting their art at festivals."<sup>2</sup> Instances are not rare of sages falling from virtue as a result of surfeit from lay people (Jāt. V. 162), nor of people entering into the cloisters for comfort and lucre (I. 311, 340). Parents would choose for their boy the monastic life as the most comfortable means of a livelihood (Mv. I. 49). In the words of Mahāmoggallāna himself there was a vast number of deceitful tricksters (*saṭhā māyāvino*) who took to *pubbajita* not for belief but for livelihood (*asaddhū jīvikatthā* ; Mn. 5). The whole set of disciplinary rules laid down by Buddha throughout the Vinaya-piṭaka reveals in fact a desperate effort to resist the rush of self-seekers and criminals in the *saṃgha* and to stamp out corruption and luxury which public liberality constantly impinged upon it.

Inscriptions in Karle and Nasik Caves, those from the time of Kaniṣka and Huviṣka (E. I., VIII. 17 f) and those

1 Mrs. Rhys Davids, J. R. A. S., 1901. p. 863

2 Bühler : *Epigraphia Indica*, II. 24.

in the Sanchi Topes are a sad commentary on the monastic vow of poverty. Out of the 285 votive inscriptions from Sanchi as many as 54 monks and 37 nuns appear as donors. "They must have obtained by begging the money required for making the rails and pillars. This was no doubt permissible, as the purpose was a pious one. But it is interesting to note the different proceedings of the Jaina ascetics who according to the Mathura and other inscriptions, as a rule, were content to exhort the laymen to make donations and to take care that this fact was mentioned in the votive inscriptions."<sup>1</sup>

The argument may be put forth that the *brahmadeya* Brāhmaṇas, regular and immunity from revenue accrued not and secular. to all Brāhmaṇas but only to śrotriyaś or those who studied the Vedas and performed sacrifices, thereby performing some social duty. The Śāntiparva indeed carefully demarcates pious Brāhmaṇas who are to be exempted, from secular Brāhmaṇas who are to be fleeced with taxes and forced labour. But is there any recognised hallmark of piety? The Brāhmaṇical works themselves show the priests haggling and bargaining for their fee (Śp. 29. 124f; cf. Arth. III. 14; Jāt. I. 343; III. 45). They were organised exactly on the lines of industrial guilds and laws are laid down for the division of their earnings (Manu, VIII, 210, 206; Nār. III. 8). The Pali literature, especially the Jātakas, show that the recipients of *brahmadeya* gifts of land as those of *lābhasakkāra* in the Buddhist Order were not devoted spiritualists. Even if it be accepted that wealth and privileges poured upon bona fide religious persons and orders, history has abundant proof that such a constant out-flow

1 Buhler. *Epigraphia Indica*, II. 7.

corrupts even the purest recipient and works his ruin. At any rate the state became the poorer and had to lay its fingers in the pockets of the toiler.

The pseudo-religious caste had not the monopoly of power and privileges. Two other estates  
 Military lords. were aligned with them on identity of interests, known in the Dharmaśāstras as the Kṣatriya and the Vaiśya. Although proofs are lacking of the existence of a group of hereditary military castes under the general name of Kṣatriya, still there is little doubt that there was a class of nobles who cultivated the arts of politics and war and occupied certain high posts of government. With the expansion of the king's family his kinsmen were absorbed in this class as generals, feudatory lords, governors and bureaucrats. Or, in the case of oligarchical tribes like the Śākya, the Koliyas, the Vṛjjis, the Mallas and later on the Rajput clans, the so-called Kṣatriya caste divided the tribal land among themselves. With land they monopolised political power. Their much-belauded republican government was confined to the *rājakulas*;—the *sāmantas*, *uparājas*, *amātyas* and other underlings enjoyed that much of wealth and power which their masters condescended to spare for them, and the slaves and hirelings who formed the majority in the state cultivated lands, gave their life in battles to defend their master's interests and obtained food and clothing or wages up to or more often below their living.<sup>1</sup>

Side by side with this class rose the class of merchants ;  
 Mercantile magnates. proprietorship of vast landed estates went under the grip of capital. The *śreṣṭhīs* did not stop with sending fleets loaded with cargo to Java,

1 See *supra*.

Sumatra and the Eastern Archipelago ; they also cultivated vast stretches of arable land by means of gangs of slaves and hirelings and thereby attained to the topmost rung of the economic ladder, familiar as *asitikotiṭṭhavo*. Like the *gāmahojaka* and the Brāhmaṇa magnates, the *seṭṭhi* accumulated huge quantities of grain which he cornered in times of scarcity and which thus gave him a sinister influence in society. He represents "a crosscut through the ancient system of castes, a plutocracy perpetuating itself as an aristocracy."<sup>1</sup> The *seṭṭhi* and the industrial *gaṇa* were powerful economic interests which had large influence in the policy of the state and which no king dared to defy. From this community was filled up the high post of financial adviser (*seṭṭhitthāna*) which presumably determined the economic policy and functions of the state and which often tended to be hereditary (Jāt. I. 231, 248 ; III. 475 ; IV. 62 ; V. 384). As owner of eighty crores he is found highly esteemed by king and by citizens and country-folk alike (*rājapūjito nagarajanāpadapūjito*). As Fick says, the *seṭṭhi*, by virtue of his immense wealth, became indispensable to the king, as we find him constantly in his retinue.<sup>2</sup>

As in Europe of the 18th century it is seen that the economic content of democratic movements was the struggle of the rising bourgeoisie to seize power from the grip of the firmly entrenched clergy and nobles, so the ideal of Buddhist republicanism was the replacement of the Brāhmaṇa priesthood by the *seṭṭhis* and *gahapatis* and their royal allies. Against the Brāhmaṇical pretension to supremacy explicit in

Economic background of Buddhism.

1 W. Hopkins, *India Old and New* ; p. 172.

2 Op. cit.

the fourfold caste order and asserted in many legends like that of Viśvāmitra, the Kṣatriya aspirant to Brāhmaṇism and that of Paraśurāma, the destroyer of Kṣatriyas twentyone times all over India, the Buddhist works give precedence to Khattiyas over the Brāhmaṇa, Gahapati and Sudda and very often bursts into vigorous denunciation of the Brāhmaṇas with their sacrificial rites and sordid motives of gain. "The Khattiyas are superior, the Brāhmaṇas are inferior," so says Gotama (Ambaṭṭhasutta Dn., cf. Jacobi : Jinasutras, pp. 225f). "The superior position of the Khattiyas in the Eastern countries and the corresponding decline of Brahmanical influence present themselves to us with irresistible necessity when we study the Pali Literature."<sup>1</sup> P. 482 L. 10. The Upaniṣads give an earlier glimpse into this epic rivalry centering round the issue of animal sacrifice. The priestly and orthodox party upholding animal sacrifice had their stronghold in the Kuru-Pāñcāla country, the heterodoxy led by the Kṣatriyas was ascendant in the eastern countries of Kāśī, Kośala, Magadha and Videha which are in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa forbidden lands for the pure Brāhmaṇa of the Northern Aryan extraction. The Brāhmaṇas there, it is said, had lost their dignity because of submission to the Kṣatriyas. In the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and the Chandogya, Brāhmaṇa sages are represented as defeated in philosophical disputes with, or as learning philosophical truths from Kṣatriya kings. The culmination of this hostility on ideological plane is seen in the court of Janaka at Videha where Yājñavalkya, a Brāhmaṇa of the East had a hospitable

1 *Ibid.*, p. 56 and the following pages for references. For the history of the struggle for supremacy between the two classes, R. C. Majumdar ; *Corporate Life*, pp. 366-72. Also *infra*, p. 508.

seat to defeat in polemics the orthodoxy of the North and establish his thesis of Brahmayidyā. "The prevalence of merchants and traders (in the Sanchi Ins.) seems to indicate, what indeed may be gathered also from the sacred books of the Buddhists, that this class was the chief stronghold of Buddhism."<sup>1</sup> The *seṭṭhi* and *gahapati* were the principal tax-paying class<sup>2</sup> and so had their axes to grind against the Brāhmaṇa exemptees swelling with wealth. The economic background of Buddhist heresy is the combination and revolt of the two powerful class interests—the military and the mercantile—against the old monopoly interests of Brāhmaṇa priesthood.

The mercantile interest served the *saṃgha* as lay *upāsakas*, built them *caityas* and *stūpas*, fed them with choice delicacies and rose to power and position. The long feud with Brāhmaṇism at last terminated in a compromise. The *seṭṭhi* and *gahapati* had their position acknowledged, and with their purpose served, they let down the Buddhist and shifted their bounties and allegiance to the Brāhmaṇa. Inscriptions from the time of the Guptas record this change.

Thus the upper classes appropriated national wealth and political power. The slave and the Slave and hireling. hireling who with their toil built the edifice of civilisation and prosperity remained the deprived and despised underdogs of society. They were employed in gangs for the service of the rich. The slave was like his master's cattle. He had no juristic personality nor property. The male slave is seen to work on hire to feed his master, the

1 Bühler *loc. cit.*

2 Flick, *op. cit.*, p 79. For the 'marked leaning to aristocracy in ancient Buddhism', see Oldenberg: *Buddha*, pp. 155ff.

female slave is seen to warm his bed. If sometimes they were treated well, it was in the same way as the owner cared for his cattle from his own interest or from prolonged association. The servant working for a wage or for share of profit had not the same luck. In most cases he was denied a living wage and a square meal. This landless proletariat remained at the lowest rung of the economic ladder. The lawgivers and politicians did not spare them the barest amenities of life.

The three aristocratic classes into whose hands concentrated national wealth form the *duija* group; the impoverished *dāsa* class forms the *Śūdra* group.<sup>1</sup> Of the so-called *Brāhmaṇas*, *Kṣatriyas* and *Vaiśyas* many were impoverished by the shufflings of fate and relegated to the plebeian class. *Brāhmaṇas* and *gahapatis* fallen from fortune appear as poorest farmers, artisans and hunters. In literature, sacred and profane, they appear with despised callings of quacks, king's orderlies, wood-cutters, petty traders and craftsmen and in every conceivable role. Scions of royal race defeated in battle or dice or victims of court or palace intrigue are seen to be reduced to begging or to slavery. The commercial magnate whose caravan was plundered by brigands or whose cargo was sunk in the ocean had to live by serving others. *Mahākaccana* illustrates the equality of castes by pointing out the uncontroverted fact that any one of the four castes, if he can become rich, may employ another of even superior caste to serve him as slave (Mn. 84; Suk. III. 369-75). Against Senaka's contention that "wise men

1 Mark the indiscriminate use of *dāvajāti*, *śūdrājāti* and *dāsavarṇa*, *śūdravarṇa*.

and fools, men educated or uneducated, do service to the wealthy, although they be high-born and he be base-born," Bodhisatta has to take his stand on the next world to prove the superiority of a poor sage over a wealthy fool (Jāt. VI. 356ff). The cant confession is made in the Mahābhārata that wealth confers family dignity while poverty takes it away (III. 192. 21). Social precedence was thus determined not by birth but by wealth. Thus the priestly caste theory, which was sought to be foisted on society, broke down under the inexorable pressure of material circumstances and gave place to hostile classes belonging to different economic categories.

Aligned with slaves and hirelings was another class,—  
 the low castes and low crafts who under  
 The Mleccha. the general brand of *mleccha* were degraded even below the Śūdra. The pariahs pursued arts and trades which the society could not dispense with but which repelled the sophisticated sense of refinement and culture. The Pali works testify that they lived outside the village gate and city gate, i.e., in isolation from civilised society. The habitat assigned them by the lawgivers was the hill and forest or the cremation ground. Tree is to be their shed, iron their ornament and pariah arts their profession (Manu, X. 50 ; Mbh. XIII. 48. 32). They exposed themselves to any length of corporal punishment if they defiled with their filthy presence the air and water in the vicinity of their superiors. They were denied the great honour and privilege enjoyed by the slaves and serfs, that of serving their masters.

It is true that the door of the *saṃgha* was open to all these people excepting the slaves. But they are very seldom seen as members of the Order ; firstly, because the homeless condition was often a reaction from surfeit of

wealth and power which these people were totally denied ;  
 Spiritual culture for the *mleccha* secondly, because the poverty and degradation which was their habitual lot did not foster that high enlightenment and spiritual consciousness which actuate monastic zeal. "Judging from their isolated and low position which excludes them from all communion with the Aryan people and as a consequence of this, from all participation in spiritual life the actual existence of such holy men is extremely doubtful." They were at least rare.

The pronounced social contrast between the two classes is expressed through the familiar Pali phrases 'mahā-bhogakula' and 'daliddakula,' 'sadhanā,' and 'adhanā,' 'sugatā,' and 'duggatā,' through the lamentations of Gālava (V. 106. 11) and of Yudhiṣṭhira (V. 71. 25f) in the Mahābhārata that one destitute of wealth is a wretch, that there is no virtue for the poor, that wealth is an essential contributory factor to the cultivation of virtue. In the Pali passage quoted at the beginning of this Book, ignorance, low birth, poverty, vice and purgatory form an unbroken chain, while wisdom, pedigree, wealth, virtue and heaven constitute a set of counterparts going together. This is not an isolated passage and recurs almost *verbatim* throughout the canons (Mn. 93, 96 ; An. II. 85 ; Sn. I. 93 ; Pug. IV. 19). Virtue thus tended to be a

1 Flick, *op. cit.*, p. 51, 10 among the 259 authors included in the anthology of Theragāthā and 4 out of the 73 in the Therīgāthā come from the ranks of the poor and despised: actor, pariah, fisherman, labourer, slave, trapper, 'poor family,' etc., i.e., about 4·2 p. c. The bulk come from Brāhmaṇas and aristocrats and a few from among the artisans (Paramatthadīpani).

monopolistic concern of the upper orders with ample leisure and ample wealth ; and in the preservation of this leisure and wealth they ultimately made a caricature of virtue which poisoned the social organism and led to metamorphosis and decay.

These are not to deny that this social inequality was not as glaring in India as in other ancient cultures. Class differences did not assume those horrible and destructive proportions in India as they did in ancient Rome, Greece and Egypt and later in France and Russia. That implacable hatred between the Patrician and the Plebeian, the perennial and seething disaffection of the helots always ready to burst and explode the Spartan state and the enslavement of the whole people below the Pharaoh with his priesthoods and entourage in the land of the Pyramids,—these scenes are not witnessed in India. It is an interesting subject for investigation why class conflict and class consciousness did not mature in this country.<sup>1</sup>

The chief reason is that the zamindary system could not develop in ancient India. The freeholder was real master of his arable and homestead land. The small farmer defrayed his expenses cultivating his own land ; in the eyes of law he was equal with the great landowner—the favouring class compromise : 1. The lower middle class. *asitikoṭivibhavo kuṭumbiko* who employed slaves and serfs to cultivate his fields. Generally he had no fear of losing his property except in cases of famine or a natural calamity. Ordinarily he

1 Class struggles were rare but not altogether absent though evidence are lacking. The Kaivarta revolt in the reign of Mahipāla in Bengal is a positive instance.

remained in hereditary enjoyment of his patrimony unless he pitted himself against the powerful and defaulted in the payment of revenues. The *gāmahojaka* was not a zamindar to whom land was farmed ; he enjoyed the revenues of and ruling powers in his *bhogagāma* but not ownership and usufruct.<sup>1</sup> The independent small freeholders and craftsmen may be termed the petty bourgeoisie of ancient India who from the last few centuries are being gradually declassed and levelled with the proletarian mass. This middle class formed the majority distributed over a wide range and this class of lower Vaiśyas held the balance between the Śūdra and Duija classes. Society was a complex hierarchy and because the centre was heavy, poise was maintained.

The second point to note is that the exploited elements in India were never welded into a homogeneous mass with the consciousness of a common class interest. It is seen even now that the

2. Exploited class,  
a composite body.

Śavara discards the Caṇḍāla as an untouchable as much as he is himself hated as a low caste by the Brāhmaṇa. The exponents of divine will have created and perpetuated this division among the *hinavarṇas* with masterly skill. The slaves and hired folk too could not combine with the pariahs,— they could not even develop a communal consciousness among themselves. The reason for this is that they were not numerically strong like the slaves in Rome and Egypt and they lived scattered and distributed in different localities. We have no *dāsagāma* or *bhatikagāma* as well we hear of *caṇḍālagāma* or *neśādagāma*. The latter lived in villages of their own. The slaves and wage-earners lived with their masters or were scattered in

their several sheds. The slaves were not always treated inhumanly and felt the family ties of their masters ; so discontent did not spread sufficiently deep for violent action. The wage-earners had no means to organise, no facilities to build guilds and unions like *śreṇi*, *saṃgha*, *pūga*, etc., as the skilled artisans used to do to safeguard their interests. They had no fixity of dwelling and fixity of terms nor any security of service. Standing between vagrancy and starvation, eking out a miserable existence by any chance engagement, this mass of unskilled labour was thrown entirely at the mercy of the employer.

The third reason is that the lower classes were not given access to the secrets of knowledge which gives confidence and voice of protest to the inarticulate. For a Śūdra it is sacrilege to profane the *śāstras* with his inquisitiveness. From the earliest traceable times, these people were kept in dire ignorance. The holy *mantra* was constantly dinned into their ears that their only path to salvation was through service of the higher *varṇas*. Whoever had the temerity to question this authoritarian system or to strike at the closed doors of knowledge had no escape from the inquisitorial vigilance of the Brāhmaṇa and the retribution which it brought. The legend of Śambuka, a Śūdra *hīnavarṇa* who dared to perform Brāhmaṇical rites and who for this inexpiable offence forfeited heavenly bliss though killed in Rāma's hands is only a case in point. The Śūdra and Mleccha were never allowed to think and feel their position on earth.

Thus it is that the multi-caste society, compartmentally divided, integrated the parts. The mechanism of class collaboration was a slowly built process. The oldest books hark back to the existence of only one *varṇa*, that of

Brāhmaṇa or Deva in the dawning era of generation (Rv. 10. 90. 5 ; 10. 121. 1 ; Bṛ. Up. 1. 4. 10. 11 ; Mun. Up. 1. 1). This primogenital *varṇa* or uni-caste society existed only during the figment of Satyayuga recalled to emphasise Aryan solidarity and the bliss that was yet to be conquered against the hostile surroundings of the time. The selfsame literature presents a two-caste society, emerged, not from a split of the primogenital body but from the impact with another body or race, viz, the Anārya, Dasyu, Śūdra or Asura (Rv. 1. 5. 1. 8 ; 1. 103.3 ; 1. 117. 21 ; 1. 230. 8 ; 3. 34. 9 ; 5. 28. 4 ; 6. 22. 10 ; 7. 6. 3 ; 10. 22. 7f ; Av. 19. 62. 3 ; 19. 7. 8. 1 ; Bṛ. Up. 3. 3. 1), This is not class war but a war between two families of races, the aboriginal Asura or Dāsa on the one hand, the aggressor Deva or Ārya on the other.<sup>1</sup>

The two-*varṇa* war fought for the possession of the heaven, the earth and the seas, for the charms of women, greed of wealth and lust of power, legendised in innumerable *kathās* and *gāthās*, was later attenuated into the esoteric doctrine of struggle between the soul and the flesh, the sentient and the obtrude, the *sattva* and the *tamas*. This symbolisation of the *devāsura* legend was no doubt an after-thought, inasmuch as the Asuras sometimes beat the wisdom of the Devas and the Devas acquire the secrets from

1 The Rg-veda is replete with references to this protracted socio-caste struggle. "Viśvasmād sīmadhamanīndra dasyūn viśo dāsiraḥṇo rapraśastah," 5. 28. 4. Lord Indra ! You have deprived these Dasyus of all merits. You have made the Dāsa people blame-worthy. Again,

"Akarmadasyurabhi no smantiraṇanyabrato amānuṣaḥ tvam tasya mitrahan vadhar dāsasya dambhāya," 10. 22. 7f. We are surrounded by Daayus, averse to incantations, having other vows and dehumanised. Oh killer of enemies ! Kill these inflated Dāsas.

their rivals by methods not very *sāttvic*.<sup>1</sup> The spiritual antitheses of *āryabhāva* and *dāsabhāva* were moulded into the synthesis of *brahmabhāva*,—‘sarve’ *varṇā brāhmaṇā brahmajāśca sarve*’ (Sp. 318. 89), ‘sarvaṃ khalvidaṃ brahma sarvaṃ brahmamayaṃ jagat’ (Ch. Up. III. XIV. 1). But the social antitheses found their synthesis not in monism but in pluralism. The casteless or classless millennium was an idea, never a reality. The two-*varṇa* system gave way to a complex hierarchy, the *Ārya* ramifying into three *varṇas* which were interwoven into countless sub-castes and mixed castes. The Brahman remained a cosmogonical and an ontological conception, it never became a social entity. It did not regulate the social attitude of the so-called *Brāhmaṇas* and the privileged classes. The theism of *Brahmavidyā* accordingly remained at the apex of the social pyramid. The popular religion of polytheistic and pseudo-theistic cults permeated the body and the base.

1 E.g., Kaca, son of the divine sage *Bṛhaspati*, steals the secret of elixir (*sañjīvanī vidyā*) from the Asura sage *Śukra* by ingratiating with the latter’s daughter.

## CHAPTER VI

### MATERIAL BACKGROUND OF INDIAN CULTURE

So the pet patriotic tradition of a super-mundane Indian culture does not stand the test of the scientist. In the process of historical evolution, hard material facts are exposed with crude reality. On scientific analysis the glorified missionary and cultural enterprises beyond the Himalayas and the Bay of Bengal reveal similar social forces as worked behind the European migrations to Africa and Asia in the last century or recent Jewish exodus from Germany under pressure of the Nazis.

The abundant instances of sea voyages in the Jātaka stories all relate to commercial ventures in the Eastern Islands or to even baser economic motives.<sup>1</sup> The early diplomatic exchanges between princes were very often accompanied by the exchange of some rare agricultural or commercial goods. It has been held on good authority that most of the embassies from Tamil kings going with tribute to China were merely trading expeditions on joint account of the ambassadors.<sup>2</sup> The great trek to Java from north-western India was a part of the process of Śaka migration

1 One of them narrates how a whole settlement of carpenters consisting of 1,000 families took contracts for houses and furnitures—but after taking a large advance failed to do their job. Harassed by their creditors, they built [a ship and slipped off at dead of night with their families into the ocean. IV, 159.

2 J.R. A. S. 1869, pp. 490 ff.

which was stimulated by the anarchical conditions of northern India and by the conversion of the Bay of Cutch into a salt desert accompanied by the diversion of the rivers that watered it. The defeat of the white Huns by Sassanians and Turks in the latter half of the 6th century intercepted their retreat northwards. There were military pressures and defeat from the Maukharis of Kanauj. These were followed by the Turkish advance from the north and Arab raids both by sea (637) and through Persia (650-60), the overthrow of the Buddhist Saharais by their usurping Brāhmaṇist minister Chach and his persecution of the Jats,— a series of incidents which explain a steady outflow of north-Indians southward from the ports of Sind and Gujarat which was stimulated by the tradition of Javan prosperity.

Prior to the ninth century from when the decline of Buddhism stimulated large-scale migration of the faithful from Bengal and Kalinga to the Eastern Islands,<sup>1</sup> the commercial intercourse of the Buddhist merchants set the stage for missionary undertakings and latter for assumption of political supremacy.<sup>2</sup> In the memoirs of Chinese pilgrims the great Bengal emporium of Tāmralipta appears as a conspicuous Buddhist settlement. Indo-Chinese religious intercourse beginning from the 4th century A. D. was preceded by flourishing Indo-Chinese commerce from the 1st century A. D. This commercial and colonising activity as well as religious intercourse simultaneously reached their height in the time of I-tsing who records the itinerary of sixty Chinese pilgrims and bears witness to prosperous Indian colonies in the Archipelago and the East Asiatic coast which served as convenient halting places for missionaries

1 Bombay Gazetteer, Vol. I, p. 498.

2 Col. Phayre : *History of Burma Race*.

So the spread of Buddhism in the far East with Indian art traditions, the *dharmaghoṣa* and the *dharmavijaya* are ultimately traced to the political and economic circumstances of northern India and neighbouring countries.

The political intercourse between the Caesars and Kuṣāns as recorded by Roman historians is explained by the fact that "their commercial importance as controllers of one of the main trade routes between the East and the West made the friendship of the Kuṣāns or Śakas who held the Indus valley and Bactria a matter of the highest importance to Rome."<sup>1</sup> These commercial transactions brought arts and ideas in their train. Roman astronomy, Roman coinage, Roman art traditions which inspired Indo-Bactrian plastic art at Gandhāra, all flowed through the streams of Roman gold.

Thus the noble cultural heritage of Greater India dissolves into a *milieu* of material forces operating under the inexorable dictates of Nature. Royal fury, foreign invasion, embroiling debts, loss of wealth and lust of gold,—these motive forces set peoples and races on move. They only carried with them a gilded layer of Indian lore and Indian cultural traditions, the social and cultural values which were impregnated by the class-characteristics in their own country. Literature and art reflected this class stamp of society. Like literature, art was divided, though not very sharply, into two schools,—the royal art executed at Sarnath, Karle and Nasik and the folk art carved at Barhut and Sanchi. The wide activity of the guilds in spheres legislative, political and cultural and their importance recognised in all theoretical works, shows the magnitude of economic

influence. In the rise and fall of Empires, the same immutable laws were working. The great dynastic interests were supported by the rise of the Brāhmaṇa and the Śeṭṭhi on one hand and by foreign invasions on the other which threatened big properties and vested interests. In the rise and decay of religions the same principles are revealed. It would not be gratifying for the Holy Buddha to find his immortal message reduced to a medley of silly superficial rituals. He would not be flattered at his devotees worshipping his nails and teeth instead of practising the four *vijjās* and the eight *maggas*. But such is the irresistible march of history. Bereft of the economic interests which called the Buddhist message to fight the existing order with their arms and wealth, Buddhist mission died as a religious force in the country and was transplanted into foreign countries with a new and congenial economic setting.

‘*artha eva pradhānaḥ*’ so says Kauṭilya ; *arthaūlauh hi dharmakāmāviti* (Arth. I. 7).

## APPENDIX

### THE DATE OF THE ARTHAŚĀSTRA

The controversy over the date of the Arthaśāstra attributed to Kauṭilya has of late tended to subside and scholars with rare exceptions are complacently building their theses upon the theory of Vincent Smith and Shamasastri assigning the work to the 4th century B. C. The plea to bring it down to the 3rd century A. D. set forth by Jolly in the introduction to his edition of the Arthaśāstra and by Winternitz in the third volume of the History of Indian Literature has had no wide acceptance and was weakened by the refutation of Shamasastri and N. N. Law. In an article in the J.R.A.S., 1929 (pp. 77-89) it was shown by another scholar that the comparison of certain expressions and passages in the Arthaśāstra with Aśvaghōṣa's Buddha-carita on the one hand and with Āryaśūra's Jātakamālā and the Laṃkāvatārasūtra on the other placed the book with tolerable certainty between the beginning of the Christian era and about 150 A.D., or at most 250 A.D. In the Political History of Raychaudhuri 300 B.C. and 100 A.D. are taken as the upper and lower limits. Without any pretension to speak the last word on the subject a few clues to the chronological mystery may be gathered which expose the 4th century theory to considerable amount of criticism and incline the balance of evidence in favour of the 1st century after Christ.

The priority of the Arthaśāstra to the Smṛtis of Manu and Yājñavalkya has been sought to be proved by comparison of their social and political systems. This is based on

the raise assumptions that the theories in the Arthaśāstra correlate to facts and institutions without fail and that there was absolute uniformity of beliefs and practices in Magadha and the Brahmarṣideśa or land of Delhi and the Eastern Punjab where the sacred institutes were born. The points of analogy moreover are not less if not more outspoken than those of disparity. As between the Arthaśāstra and Manu, Yājñavalkya and Nārada affinity is very close with regard to the laws of hire and contract, of debt, deposit, witness, gift, stolen property and ownership; robbery, defamation and intimidation; assault, marital rights and proprietary rights of women and inheritance. Manu and Yājñavalkya attest the fixing of price of merchandise. There is also similarity with Manu on the existence of private and communal ownership of land side by side, acceptance of a day's work from common artisans in lieu of taxes, salt as a royal monopoly among other things (land-grants dating from the time of the Śātavāhanas frequently confirm that salt was a royal monopoly under their rule) and reference to the Magadha among mixed castes. The argument that the Arthaśāstra known only four kinds of slaves while Manu seven and Nārada fifteen was put forth from oversight for the Arthaśāstra distinctly refers to the (1) *udaradāsa*—born slave, (2) *kṛita*—purchased, (3) *āhitaka*—acquired by mortgage, (4) *sakṛdātmādhātā*—voluntary enslavement, (5) *daṇḍapraṇīta*—enslaved by court-decree, (6) *gṛhajāta*—born in the house, (7) *dāyāgata*—acquired by inheritance from ancestors, (8) *dhvajāhṛta*—captured in war or raids. It is moreover pointed out that slaves might be acquired in other ways that are left unspecified (*labdhakṛitānām anyatamāni*). Thus the Arthaśāstra list is wider than Manu's (VIII. 415) and embraces almost all the varieties cited by Nārada (V. 26-28) only under more numerous sub-heads

except a few which may have been later development. It is most unsafe to derive chronological conclusions from comparison between *śāstra* literature which not only ignores facts in many instances but represent theories and institutions of a much earlier age than the one when they are composed. Still the closer resemblance of the *Arthaśāstra* to the later *dharmaśāstras* than to the earlier 'dharmaśūtras' of Gautama, Bodhāyana, etc., cannot be left entirely out of account.

A conspicuous example of this analogy is found in the currency system described in the three types of literature and in Pali works.

Commenting on *Suttavibhaṅga*, the *Fārājika*, 11-16, Buddhaghosa says that in Bimbisāra's time in Rājagaha :—

1 Kahāpaṇa	=	20 māsakas
1 pāda	=	5 māsakas
1 Kahāpaṇa	=	4 pādas

This *kahāpaṇa* however, he warns, is the ancient *nīla-kahāpaṇa* not the *Rudradāmaka*—a 'depreciated standard adopted and followed from *Rudradāman*'s time.

Sāriputta again in his commentary on the passage of Buddhaghosa, explains that this *Rudradāmaka* is  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a *nīlakahāpaṇa*.

From a comparison of the weight of the silver *dharāṇa* as given by Manu, Yājñavalkya and Viṣṇu and of the *Rudradāmaka kahāpaṇa* it is found that they bear the same ratio in weight as the *nīlakahāpaṇa* to the latter, so that the *dharāṇa* and the *nīlakahāpaṇa* may be identified denoting the same class of silver coins.<sup>1</sup> It is to be noted that while

1 See C. D. Chatterji's article on Numismatic Data in Pali Literature in B. C. Law's *Buddhist Studies*, pp. 424 ff.

Gautama and Kātyāyana, like the Pali texts retain the term *kārṣāpaṇa* for silver as well as copper coins, Manu, Yājñavalkya and Viṣṇu reserve *kārṣāpaṇa* only for copper coins and invent the separate term *dharāṇa* for silver coins. Probably the Pali term *nilakahāpaṇa* was devised to remove this source of confusion.

Now the Arthaśāstra agrees with the later law-books in this respect. Its silver coin is *dharāṇa* and its copper coin *kārṣāpaṇa*. It also agrees with Manu, Yājñavalkya and Viṣṇu in respect of the prescribed weight of the standard gold and copper money,—the *suvarṇa* and the *paṇa* or *kārṣāpaṇa*—but differs as regards the weight of the standard silver coin—the *dharāṇa*. This difference may be easily accounted for. The prescribed weight of *dharāṇa* in the Arthaśāstra closely approximates to the prescribed weight of the *suvarṇa* and *paṇa* the margin being explicable by the fact that since the weight of the *gaurasarṣapa* and the *guṇja* or *kṛṣṇala* might slightly vary in different parts of India, the ratio between the two given in the Smṛtis may not be the exact standard. It seems that the author of the Arthaśāstra aimed at a currency reform whereby the same weight standard could be prescribed for the three classes of coins like many other projected reforms in other spheres of administration.<sup>1</sup>

Shamasastri claims that the *kārṣāpaṇa* which according to Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya was in earlier times equivalent to 16 *māśas*, indicated the Arthaśāstra's equation of 1 *suvarṇa* or *karṣa* to 16 *māśas*. He has confused between the weight standard of *karṣa* (to which conformed the standard gold coin *suvarṇa*) with the silver money called *kārṣāpaṇa*. In the Arthaśāstra's table 1 *karṣa* = 16 *māśas* = 80 *guṇjas* or *kṛṣṇalas*

1 C. D. Chatterji, *op. cit.*, pp. 423 ff.

(or *ratis*) according to Smṛti nomenclature while a *kārṣāpaṇa* weighs 56 grains or 32 *kṛṣṇalas*.<sup>1</sup> The *kārṣāpaṇa* of Patañjali may of course be identified with the *dharāṇa* of the Arthaśāstra which is equated with 16 silver *māsas*. But this equation is repeated with Manu (VII. 135-36), Yājñavalkya (1. 364) and Viṣṇu (IV. 11-12) and in this as in many other respects the author of the Arthaśāstra may have merely lined up with contemporary Smṛti literature without caring whether the system described prevailed in his time actually or only in tradition ; or the system may have been revived from the 1st century A. D.

The standard gold coin in the Arthaśāstra is *suvarṇa* which in earlier literature is *niṣka*, *śatamāna* and *kṛṣṇala* and in later ones *dināra*. But no chronological demarcation can be drawn between the *suvarṇa* and the *dināra*. The *dināra* never became a standard token coin all over India though it is found here and there from the 1st century A.D., while on the other hand the *suvarṇa* continues to be the standard as late as in Usavadāta's Nasik inscriptions equalling 35 *kārṣāpaṇas*. Thus the mention of *suvarṇa* as standard gold coin places the Arthaśāstra positively later than the stage when the *niṣka* was the current coin as represented in the Epics and the Jātakas but not necessarily earlier than the 1st century B. C. when the *dināra* began to obtain currency in parts of India.

The comparison of the political and social theories of the Arthaśāstra with the fragments of Megasthenes bespeaks

1 The average weight of the Rudradāma's *kahāpaṇa* or old silver punch-marked coins is 42 grains. Therefore  $1 \text{ nilakahāpaṇa} = \frac{42 \times 4}{3} \text{ grs.} = 32 \text{ kṛṣṇalas}$  or *ratis*, 1 *rati* being approximately equal to 1.75 grs. C. D. Chatterji, *op. cit.*, pp. 423 ff.

a similar wrong mode of approach towards the chronological problem as its comparison with the legal injunctions. A political philosopher is no historian. Had Kauṭilya been the maker of the Maurya Empire and founder of the dynasty as well as the author of the monumental treatise it is of course likely that his pet theories would have been worked out in practice and Megasthenes' testimony agreed in many details over them. But Megasthenes differs no less than he agrees. He refers to a good war-practice that crops and lands are not destroyed by belligerents; the Arthaśāstra definitely enjoins such devastation (IX. 1). His affirmation that infliction of injury on royal artisans or evasion of municipal tithe entailed death sentence is not found in the Arthaśāstra's penal code—which is more akin to that of Manu and Yājñavalkya. The evidences of Megasthenes on writing, on famine and on usury though faulty, contain an indirect truth which substantially militates against the Arthaśāstra.

While these conflicting evidences are dismissed on the score of the rashness of Megasthenes' statements the observation on non-existence of slavery is adduced as tallying with the liberal rules of the Arthaśāstra on slaves. But in the Arthaśāstra's time there were *mleccha* slaves who are summarily passed over, but who obviously far outnumbered the *ārya* slaves and for whom there was no mitigation. Megasthenes therefore seems to have either made a statement without knowledge of facts and consequently of no worth, or the *mleccha* slaves must not have been so numerous in his day as in the time of the Arthaśāstra.

Megasthenes and archaeological excavations show that Pāṭaliputra was surrounded by a timber palisade and an outer ditch. The Arthaśāstra is much against the use of wood because "fire finds a happy abode in it" and wants three ditches to be dug round a fort (II. 3)

The supposition that the Arthaśāstra reflects pre-Buddhistic society does not stand in the face of the clear reference to *stūpa* (XIII. 2) and to the *śākyas* and *ājīvikas*. The proscription of these people along with the *śūdras* and the *pravrajita* (III. 10) in ceremonials devoted to the gods and the manes is characteristic of the movement of Brāhmaṇical revival which is held to have begun 'from about the time of the Suṅgas. The use of the word *śākya* to denote a *bhikṣu* is of special significance. We do not come across such use earlier than in Kuṣāṇ inscriptions where the word *śākyabhikṣu* is commonplace<sup>1</sup> and later in the Divyāvadāna.

So far for the weakness of the 4th century theory. There are positive evidences of more weight which point to the 1st century A.D.

The strongest point in support of the post-Christian origin of the Arthaśāstra is the structure of the text. It is striking that it not only expounds a methodology of treating a subject which is foreign to earlier works but actually and scrupulously follows that methodology (*tantrayukti*). The medical treatise of Suśruta which is assigned to about the 2nd century A. D. and the Pali works *Nettipakaraṇa* and *Peṭokopadesa* belonging to about the 1st century A.D. follow the same order and expound it just in the same manner. Suśruta in particular agrees with the Arthaśāstra in definition and even in the number of the *tantrayuktis* which is 32 (*Uttaratantra* LXV). The nomenclature is also the same except that for the Arthaśāstra's '*upamānam*' and '*uttarapakṣa*' Suśruta substitutes '*anekanta*' and '*nirṇaya*' respectively. The definitions resemble not only in idea but in many cases also in language. A few parallels may be quoted.

1 For references, see *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol X, p. 222.

Arthaśāstra	Suśruta
1. Yam-artham-adhikṛtyo-cyate tad-adhikaraṇam.	Same.
2. Śāstrasya prakaraṇā-nupūr-vi-vidhānam,	Prakaraṇānupūrvyā-bhihi-taṃ vidhānam.
3 Vākya-yojanā yogah	Yena vākyaṃ yujyate sa yogah.
4. Samāsa-vākyaṃ-uddeśah.	Samāsa.kathanam-uddeśah.
5. Vyāsavākyaṃ nirddeśah.	Vistāravacanam nirddeśah.
6. Yad-anuktam-arthād-āpad-yate sārthāpattiḥ.	Yad-akīrtitam-arthād-āpa-dyate sārthāpattiḥ.
7. Ubhayato-hetumānarthasamśayah.	Ubhaya-hetudarśanam samśayah.
8. Yena vākyaṃ samāpyate sa vākyaśeṣah.	Yena padenā-nuktena vākyaṃ samāpyate sa vākyaśeṣah.
9. Paravākyaṃ-apratī-siddham-anumatam.	Paramatam-apratī-siddham-anumatam.
10. Atīśayavarṇanā Vyākhyānam.	Atīśayopavarṇanam vyākhyānam.
11. Abhipluta-vyapakarṣaṇam-apavargah.	Abhivyāpyāpakarṣaṇam-apavargah, etc., etc.

That Suśruta's definitions are a little more elaborate and precise is easily explained by the improvement undergone in a few intervening decades. It may be noted that later literature do not formulate but simply follow the method and in them its divisions evolve and multiply as for example in the *Samhitā* of Caraka which follows 34 sub-divisions (*Siddhisthāna*, XII).<sup>1</sup>

1 See B. M. Barua ; *Old Brāhmī Inscriptions*, p. 285.

The reference to Cīna in the Arthaśāstra is a distinct pointer to an age much later than the year 249 B.C. when the Ts'in dynasty came to rule in China whence the name Cīna was introduced in India. The significant name appears in no Indian literature of proved earlier date. The earliest Pali reference to Cīna and Cīnapaṭṭa occurs in the Buddhavaṃsa and the Apadāna (I. 14 ; 406, 14), the two Pali compilations that were not included in the canon earlier than in the 1st century B.C. The instances in the Epics are evidently later interpolations as is further proved by the different readings in available recensions. To parade their geographical and racial knowledge the pedants of a later age introduced the Cīnas, the Śakas, the Yavanas (sometimes even the Romakas and the Pārasikas) and other generic terms indicating foreign barbarians along with the indigenous barbarians who existed from an older time and had place in the original text. These Cīnas inhabited the borderlands along the Bāhlika, the Tibetan valleys and the Prāgjyotiṣa and possibly implied the Mongoloid races percolating from the Himālayan ranges or the people who acknowledged some sort of suzerainty under the Chinese empire (Rāmāyaṇa, IV. 44. 12-14 ; Mahābhārata, II. 26. 9 ; 51, 23 ; III. 176 ; VI. 9). Their chief produce was skin as well as woollen textile and fabrics of jute and silk in which they specialized along with the people of Bāhlī (pramāṇa-rāga-sparśādyam bāhlī-cīna-samudbhavam. Aūrṇaṇṇa rāṅkavaṇṇaiva paṭajam kīṭajan-tathā, Mbh. II 51.26). In the Arthaśāstra Sāmūra, Cīnasi and Sāmūli are skins procured from Vāhlava which according to Bhaṭṭasvāmī is the name of a country on the Himālayan borders ; and the silk and jute fabrics have become famous Chinese luxuries in Indian market (tayā kauṣeyam cīnapaṭṭaśca cīnabhūmijā vyākhyātāh II. 11). This is reminiscent of the verse in the Buddhavaṃsa, XXIV. II, which runs as :

'pallunnaṃ cīnapaṭṭaṇṇa koseyyaṃ kambalaṃ pi ca.' The statements of the Mahābhārata, the Arthaśāstra and the Buddhavaṃsa are remarkably parallel and reflect approximately the same age which in the case of the Buddhavaṃsa cannot be earlier than the 1st century B.C. From Chinese and Indian sources it is definitely known that this flourishing intercourse between China and India began from the dawn of the Christian era.

No less significant is the reference to Ceylonese sandal as 'pārasamudraka' (II. 11, Bhaṭṭaswāmī's commentary). In the Periplus of the Erythrean Sea of which the date is conclusively fixed near about the 6th decade of the 1st century A.D. and in Pliny's Natural History which also belongs to the same century, Ceylon is referred to as Palisimundu.<sup>1</sup> Now Megasthenes knows Ceylon as Taprobane. The same name is seen in Aśoka's Edicts. The Rāmāyaṇa, however, knows it not only as Tāmaparṇī but also as Siṃhala and Laṃkā. Had the name Pārasamudra been in vogue in the time of the original composition of the Rāmāyaṇa which is not far removed from the beginning of the Maurya Empire<sup>2</sup> it would most probably have been used by the author of the Epic. The Arthaśāstra is thus acquainted with a name that seems to have existed in the 1st century A.D. but not earlier.

The industrial guilds in the Arthaśāstra are a constant source of menace and dangerous rival to royal authority. Villages and agricultural operations are protected against their interference. They supply militia to the royal force

1 For the identification of Pārasamudra with Palisimundu see Raychaudhuri's note in Indian Antiquary, Vol. XLVIII.

2 Winternitz : History of Indian Literature, Vol. I.

and are alternately wooed or intrigued against by kings. They serve as state banks and by means of sinister cartels and cornerings influence price. This extraordinary growth of the *śreṇīs* into an incalculable political and economic force is suggested to have been a later development by a comparative study of the earlier and later Smṛtis and post-Christian inscriptions. In Manu and Yājñavalkya the cartel and corner systems are found in full swing, an unwholesome factor in the market raising and lowering price by their machinations. The banking function of the *śreṇīs* referred to in the Arthaśāstra (V. 2 ; VII. 11) is characteristic of a later age of thriving money transactions and speedy circulation of capital, and the earliest evidence we have of such operations is in Usavadāta's Nasik Inscription assigned to the 2nd century A.D.

The emergency tax or sur-tax of *praṇaya* (V. 2) appears in the Arthaśāstra and in Rudradāman's Junagadh Rock Inscription but in no revenue or fiscal list of earlier literature or inscriptions.<sup>1</sup> What is more striking is that this levy is mentioned in the Arthaśāstra without reference to any controversy by the author, a levy on the justice of which there might well be some dispute. It may have been that the Śakas first introduced it and the earlier teachers were strangers to the tax or the distinct name by which it was known.

The Arthaśāstra inaugurates the important system of specifying dates in terms of regnal years and months, fortnights and days of an official year (*Rājavarṣaṃ māsaḥ pakṣo divasaśca vyuṣṭam* II. 6). 'But so far as the written records of Asoka hitherto discovered go he has nowhere

1 See Raychaudhuri : *Political History of Ancient India*, 4th Edn., p. 8.

mentioned the dates in terms of the year, month and day. It is in the Kuṣāṇa records that the dates have been stated for the first time in terms of the regnal year, and in that of the month and the day of an official year, cf. 'Devaputrasya Kaniṣkasya saṃ 5 : he 1 di 1.' The specification of the date in term of the regnal year, and the month, half-month and day of an official year as enjoined in the Kauṭīliya Arthaśāstra is a convention which is met with for the first time in the earliest Sanskrit inscription of Rudradāman (A.D. 150) : 'Rudradāmano varṣe dvisaptatitame (72) Mārgaśīrṣabahulapratīpadāyām' . . . . The convention once established was adhered to in later Sanskrit inscriptions.<sup>1</sup>

In the state contemplated in the Arthaśāstra Sanskrit is the official language. It is almost an established fact that from the time of the Maurya Empire right up to the beginning of the Christian era various forms of Prākṛt remained popular and official language while Sanskrit was confined to the cultured few. This is suggested by coin-legends and inscriptions<sup>2</sup> as well as by the rise of the two famous grammatical works, that of Patañjali in the north and that of Sarvavarman in the south who moreover preludes his book (Kātantra) by quoting an anecdote to illustrate how ignorant even the kings had become of the sacred language. The grammatical works heralded the revival and popularization of Sanskrit to which the Arthaśāstra is a clear testimony.

The Arthaśāstra shows intimate acquaintance with the Purāṇas and with Epic literature not only in its main plot but in many of the subsidiary ākhyānas such as those of

1 B. M. Barua : *Asoka Edicts in New Light*, p. 75.

2 See Rhys Davids : *Buddhist India*, pp. 134-36, 317-18.

Nala, Vātāpi, Māṇḍavya, Dāṇḍakya, etc. and in the theories of the great preceptors and theoreticians who are represented therein. As pointed out by Jolly most of the authorities in the field of political and social sciences quoted in the Arthaśāstra figure in the Mahābhārata and these warn against fixing the age of its composition as high as 375 B. C.

These are not to deny that the Arthaśāstra contains much that must be thrown back to the 4th century B.C. or much earlier. As has been pointed out already, this is the general characteristic of śāstra literature that they present an ideal rather than real state of society and often pass earlier opinions as their own. Unlike the Mānava Dharmaśāstra the Arthaśāstra seems to be the composition of a single author but it does not follow that all he wrote was his own. In fact, he acknowledges his debt to his predecessors, a long list of whom frequently appears in the book. And in the process of taking from earlier authorities with or without acknowledgment theories and practices crept in the text which did not belong to the author's time.

It is tempting to synchronise a great treatise like the Arthaśāstra with the foundation of the biggest empire of ancient India. But the chicanery and intrigue, the ruthless police methods, the nightmare of sedition, the unscrupulous use of poison and women reflect not the formation of a stable empire, rather its bankruptcy and decadence. The vicious theory of circles of states speaks of the *mātsyanyāya* or primitive anarchy among bundles of independent and semi-independent statelings each with unlimited territorial ambition coalescing and splitting with kaleidoscopic variety, faithlessness to allies and disrespect for treaties betray an absence of political morality which evoked scathing denunciation from Bāṇa the representative poet of another empire. The political philosophy of the Arthaśāstra

fits not so well with Maurya imperialism as with an age of turmoil when local principalities were dissolving in internecine war.

A possible explanation of the testimony to Kauṭilyan authorship in later literature may be this. Kauṭilya or Cāṇakya or Viṣṇugupta may not have been altogether a fictitious figure as supposed by Johnston<sup>1</sup> and Jolly. He is known both to the Brāhmaṇical tradition of the *Mudrārākṣasa* and *Viṣṇupurāṇa* and to the Buddhist tradition of the *Mahāvamśa* and *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa*. But had he been the man behind the throne the historians of Alexander who wrote not solely upon Megasthenes' record but utilized plenty of materials now lost to us—Justin, Quintius Curtius, Arrian, Strabo and Plutarch for example,—would not have dismissed him with silent indifference while naming Candragupta and Nanda. Shamasastri fails to note that no literature earlier than from the 4th century A.D. mentions Kauṭilya or ascribes to him either the destruction of the Nandas or the composition of the *Arthaśāstra* or even quotes from the book. The *Milindapañho*, a work believed to be compiled about the 1st century A.D., speaks of Nanda, his general Bhaddasāla, their great battle with Candragupta and of the heavy carnage on both sides but not a word about Kauṭilya. Probably he was boosted by orthodox Brāhmaṇas during the zenith of the revivalist movement under the Guptas and it was sought to prove that the king, a Kṣatriya or a Śūdra, was a mere prote'ge' of the Brāhmaṇa chancellor. The claim was bolstered up by the ascription of a masterly digest of political science to his authorship. The real author who

hailed from a later age, remained obscure and was forgotten, liberally borrowed from earlier savants among whom Kauṭilya or Cāṇakya was one and may be, the chief, just as several other collections of political maxims were issued under the name of Cāṇakya held or supposed to be a crafty politician of antiquity ; and this may be a plausible explanation of the social and political institutions of widely separated ages reflected in the floating doctrines incorporated systematically in the book.

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